CIE
{center for instructional excellence}

NMC

NMC {PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

NMC October Conference
Reimaging Learning and Work: The Transformative Impact of AI
October 14, 2025

8:00 - 8:25	Coffee, Tea, and Donuts -- Dennos Sculpture Court
8:30 - 8:45	Welcome -- Lori Hodek, Janet Lively, President Nick Nissley - Milliken Auditorium
8:45 - 9:50	AI in Action: Community Panel -- Introduction from Dr. Miloš Topić, GVSU
9:50 - 9:55	Overview of the Day -- Lori Hodek, Janet Lively
9:55 - 10:10	Travel to Session 1 Rooms
10:10 - 11:05	Session 1: Health Science (HS), Osterlin (O), & Innovation Center (TJNIC), Les Biederman (LB)
11:15 - 12:10	Session 2: Health Science (HS), Osterlin (O), & Innovation Center (TJNIC), Les Biederman (LB)
12:10 - 1:10	Lunch - provided for attendees, Timothy J Nelson Innovation Center Concourse
1:20 - 2:15	Session 3: Health Science (HS), Osterlin (O), & Innovation Center (TJNIC), Les Biederman (LB)
2:25 - 3:00	**Session 4: Health Science (HS), Osterlin (O), & Innovation Center (TJNIC), Les Biederman (LB)**
3:00 - 3:20	**Session 4 (Continued): Connect and Share Zoom from your meeting room**
3:20 - 4:00	Fall Fest Connections & Corn Hole Tournament - Faculty vs. Staff, Timothy J Nelson Innovation Center (TJNIC) (Rajkovich PE Building, if inclement weather)

View the 2025 October Conference Schedule

NMC October Conference
Reimaging Learning and Work: The Transformative Impact of AI
October 14, 2025

Opening Session: AI in Action Panel

Discover how AI is transforming education and the workplace in our community. A diverse panel of educational and industry leaders will share how their institutions are responding to Generative AI and guiding its use. Panelists will share best practices and lessons learned for integrating AI in the classroom and workspace. Bring your questions and join the conversation as we learn strategies to shape the future of AI at NMC!

Session One
10:10 - 11:05 a.m.

AI And The Workforce Of The Future

AI is transforming the workplace and reshaping the skills needed to succeed. As this technology evolves, both today's employees and tomorrow's graduates must be prepared to adapt, collaborate with intelligent systems, and embrace new opportunities. Join us for this engaging panel as leaders share their expectations and how to prepare the workforce for the future.

Session Moderator: Leah Melichar, Director of Training & Development, Northwest Michigan Works

Panelists: Kate Hogan, Vice President Learning & Development, Hagerty; Jennifer Ewing, CHRO, Human Resource Partners, Inc. & NMC Business Adjunct Faculty; Chris Linsell, Director of Content at Luxury Presence

Facilitator: Hollie DeWalt

Location: Timothy J Nelson Innovation Center 106/107

Artificial Intelligence, The Learning Cycle, And Durable Skills

This workshop will review strategies and approaches for effectively adopting artificial intelligence tools to cultivate lifelong learning and durable skills. The Durable Skills Framework will be shared, highlighting important skills for lifelong learning and adaptability in various contexts. The learning cycle will be explored to consider the timing of specific tools to assist with learning goals. Resources, specific strategies, and some examples will be shared.

Session Leaders: Brandon Everest, NMC Social Sciences Instructor, NMC, Kristy McDonald, NMC Business Instructor, ELI Co-directors

Location: Timothy J Nelson Innovation Center 104/105

AI Toolkit For Outreach And Communication
This hands-on session is designed to equip faculty, staff, and administrators with practical AI-powered tools and strategies to enhance their outreach efforts and communication with students, colleagues, and the wider community. Participants will explore user-friendly AI applications that streamline personalized messaging, automate routine communications, and help organizations stay on top of important tasks. The session also addresses ethical considerations and best practices for integrating AI in educational communication, empowering faculty and staff to leverage technology effectively while maintaining authenticity and inclusivity in their interactions.
Session Leaders: Sam Charnes, Associate Vice Provost of Education Operations, Research, and Technology, Interlochen Arts Academy
Facilitator: Laura Stevens
Location: Timothy J Nelson Innovation Center 123 (Computer Lab)

Information Literacy In The Age Of AI
As AI tools continue to make performance gains as summarizers, remixers, and pattern recognizers across text, audio, video, and other types of data, it becomes increasingly critical to reckon with their impact on human processes of information gathering and knowledge creation. What are emerging AI technologies' strengths and weaknesses as information-seeking aids and research assistants? How will they impact the fields of journalism, publishing, scholarship, and creative arts, the fields responsible for creating the raw materials they rely on to provide value and benefit to human users? What does all of this mean for educators, learners, readers, creators, and citizens? This session for faculty and staff will explore these questions.
Session Leader: Nicco Pandolfi, NMC Librarian
Location: Health Science 114

AI In The People-Centered Creative Process
In academic year 2024/25, the Interdisciplinary Arts program at Interlochen Arts Academy created a performance piece called Figure Drawing, which used AI tools as part of the process of creating a work of contemporary dance, based in the visual art practice of drawing the figure. Join us for a conversation about the potentials and challenges of using AI as part of a collaborative artistic process.
Session Leader: Clyde Sheets, Director of Interdisciplinary Arts, Interlochen Center for the Arts
Facilitator: Eric Carlson
Location: Health Science 116

Co-Intelligence Book Discussion
Join us for a 55-minute discussion of *Co-Intelligence* by Ethan Mollick, a thought-provoking exploration of how humans and AI can work together to solve problems, spark creativity, and shape the future of work. Together, we'll unpack key insights from the book, reflect on what "co-intelligence" means in our own roles and organizations, and consider practical ways to collaborate with AI as a partner. This session offers an engaging space to share perspectives, exchange ideas, and walk away with new strategies for working more effectively alongside intelligent systems.
Session Leader: Kerrey Woughter, NMC Director of Library Services
Location: Health Science 216

Getting Started With AI: Boost Your Efficiency And Make Your Workday Easier
Curious about artificial intelligence but not sure where to begin? This hands-on session is designed just for you—no tech experience required! We'll demonstrate how simple, beginner-friendly tools like ChatGPT and

Gemini can help you write polished emails, organize your to-do list, summarize long documents, save time on repetitive tasks, and provide you with an opportunity to practice these skills using real office examples. Come see how AI can become your personal assistant, helping you work smarter—not harder—in your everyday work at the college.
Session Leader: Ken Dirkin, Senior Director, Michigan Virtual Learning Research Institute
Facilitator: Hollianne McHugh
Location: Les Biederman 35/37 (Computer Lab)

You Can't Spell "Accessibility" Without "AI"
Explore how AI tools are assisting with document creation, accessibility, and ADA compliance. Topics covered include document structure, accessibility checkers, alt text generators, hand-written text conversion tools, and more.
Session Leaders: Sherry Trier, NMC Instructional Technology Specialist; Mark DeLonge, NMC Assistant Director-Instructional Technology; Ryan Bernstein, NMC Curriculum & Instructional Designer
Location: Osterlin113 (Computer Lab)

Session Two
11:15 - 12:10 p.m.

Student Perspectives On AI: A Student Panel
What are our students thinking about AI? How are they using it? How are their peers using it? What are they worried about with AI use at the college and in their future? Come to this student panel to hear how our students are thinking about and using AI.
Session Leader: Kristen Salathiel, NMC Communications Instructor, Student Panelists
Location: Timothy J Nelson Innovation Center 106/107

The Environmental And Social Ethics Of AI
The development of AI is ushering in a technological and social revolution that has and will continue to change society in a drastic way. Like the technologies of previous revolutions, AI has its own share of environmental and ethical considerations. This session will highlight some of the environmental and social ethical issues imbued in generative AI. This includes energy and water consumption and the creation of electronic waste. In addition, we will outline some of the labor and bias issues entailed both within the production and use of AI systems. The purpose of this session is to share resources on these topics and to create a space for discussion and questions.
Session Leaders: Pat Kawula, NMC Information Security Analyst; Rachel Wilczewski, NMC Social Sciences Instructor
Location: Timothy J Nelson Innovation Center 104/105

Less Work, More Fun: Everyday AI Hacks
Discover how AI can make everyday life easier—and a lot more fun! In this interactive session, we'll explore creative ways to use AI for gaming, music, landscaping, and more. You'll also learn simple prompt-writing tips and have the chance to share your own favorite ideas. Join us to see how AI can turn ordinary tasks into exciting opportunities for creativity and efficiency!
Session Leaders: Skylar Berry, NMC Financial Aid Specialist; Kyle Morrison, NMC Coordinator-Media and Instructional Technology
Location: Timothy J Nelson Innovation Center 123 (Computer Lab)

Why And How Writing To Learn Still Works Despite The GenAI Context
If you are like me, the prevalence of GenAI tools may have driven you to include more timed, in-class writings and proctored tests as major assessments of student learning in your classes this semester. This session won't try to dissuade you from doing that, but we'll look at how it might be possible to also maintain valuable writing-to-learn assessments even in the context of GenAI.
Session Leader: Melissa Sprenkle, NMC Communications Instructor
Location: Health Science 114

Trust, Truth, And Technology: Navigating AI Safely
"*AI, Truth, and Trust: What Every Educator Needs to Know* explores how artificial intelligence is reshaping the way students learn, think, and find information. This session helps faculty navigate the opportunities, risks, bias, misinformation, and privacy. The presentation will cover practical ways to model ethical use, build student awareness, and strengthen critical thinking so technology enhances learning without compromising trust."
Session Leader: Shaun Bertrand, Vice President, Cybersecurity, Pellera
Facilitator: Scott Goethals
Location: Health Science 116

Optimizing Team Workflows With AI: A Manager's Toolkit
Want to help your team work smarter and more efficiently? This session is designed for community college managers and team leads who are curious about how AI can streamline daily operations—no tech expertise needed. We'll explore how to streamline cross-functional team workflows, use AI tools to improve coordination and project tracking, reduce team bottlenecks, and support better, faster decision-making. You'll walk away with real examples, hands-on practice, and practical strategies to take back to your team.
Session Leader: Ken Dirkin, Senior Director, Michigan Virtual Learning Research Institute
Facilitator: Alison Thornton
Location: Les Biederman 35/37 (Computer Lab)

Integrating AI In Occupational And Technical Education: Empowering Instructors To Teach Prompting With Expertise
This session will highlight how instructors across occupational and technical fields are integrating AI into their teaching practices to enhance student learning and workforce readiness. Presenters include Jeff Morse, Electrical Instructor; Betsy Boris, Director of Nursing & Allied Health; and Hollianne McHugh, Manufacturing Instructor. Each will share practical examples of how they are using AI tools—particularly prompting techniques—to support instruction, improve engagement, and prepare students for the evolving demands of their professions. Attendees will gain insights into real-world applications of AI across diverse disciplines and leave with strategies to implement in their own classrooms.
Session Leader: Carolyn Andrews, NMC Coordinator/Instructor-Construction Technology
Location: Osterlin113 (Computer Lab)

Lunch Buffet
12:10 - 1:10 p.m.
Timothy Nelson Innovation Center (TJNIC)
Sponsored by The NMC Center for Instructional Excellence & NMC Professional Development Institute

---

Session Three
1:20 - 2:15 p.m.

Resilient Humanity: Thriving In The Age Of Superintelligence
This session explores what happens when AI enters a runaway self-improvement cycle—surpassing human cognition and upending familiar systems. Instead of trying to steer the course of global AI development, this talk reframes the singularity as an invitation to double down on our uniquely human strengths. You'll discover how cultivating mental resilience, ethical clarity, emotional intelligence, and meaning-making can anchor you in purpose and agency—even as machines grow more powerful—and how those capacities ripple outward to influence your students, family, and community. In this interactive session grounded in the Human Resilience Project's evidence-based frameworks, you'll learn practices for strengthening empathy and creativity, reclaiming cognitive sovereignty in the face of algorithmic persuasion, and building habits of gratitude, presence, and connection that outlast any software update. By focusing on the ways each of us can shape AI's impact on our own lives and those we influence, this talk equips you not just to survive the age of superintelligence—but to thrive within it, ensuring that people, not just programs, define our shared future.
Session Leader: Kenneth Hartman, Owner, Lucid Truth Technologies
Facilitator: Taylor Nash
Location: Timothy J Nelson Innovation Center 106/107

From Policy To Practice: Strategies For Establishing Team Norms For AI Use
This session will provide practical strategies to engage your team or department in conversations about the use of AI to accomplish shared work, establish norms for internal communication, and surface and reconcile differing perspectives on what is an acceptable use within the team. The purpose of this interactive session is not to provide you with a set of AI norms, but rather to empower you to work with your team to establish norms that acknowledge the potential of AI to streamline or enhance work, while honoring the individuals within your group, the uniquely human contribution of staff and faculty, and the existing culture of your team, group or department.
Session Leader: Kerrey Woughter, NMC Director of Library Services
Location: Timothy J Nelson Innovation Center 104/105

Your AI Co-Pilot: An Instructor's Guide to Basic Prompting and Responsible Use
Curious about AI but not sure where to start? This session is designed for you! We'll skip the overwhelming tech hype and focus on the one skill you need to use any AI tool effectively: how to ask it for what you want. Think of AI as a practical co-pilot that can help you save time on everyday tasks like drafting emails, creating assignment ideas, and organizing your notes. By handling some of the administrative work, you can free up more time and energy for what matters most: teaching and engaging with your students. We'll also have a straightforward conversation about using these tools responsibly. You'll leave with clear best practices for protecting privacy, being transparent with your students, and always using your own professional expertise to edit and approve the AI's output. This is a beginner-friendly session—no prior experience needed!
Session Leader: Danelle Brostrom, Educational Technology Coach, Traverse City Area Public Schools
Facilitator: Mark DeLonge
Location: Timothy J Nelson Innovation Center 123 (Computer Lab)

Academic Integrity In The AI Age: Strategies For Assessing Learning
AI demands that instructors revise assignments and assessments to be engaging, experiential, and locally-based, a positive change. But innovation doesn't remove our responsibility to assess student learning and uphold academic integrity, even as AI makes that more difficult than ever. Luckily, some strategies can help us continue to assess what our students have learned. Join the discussion to learn how colleagues are adapting and innovating their assessment pedagogy.
Session Leader: Janet Lively, NMC Communications Instructor
Location: Health Science 114

Policy Implications For Colleges At The Crossroads Of Artificial Intelligence And IP Law
This talk examines the evolving landscape of intellectual property (IP) in the age of Artificial Intelligence (AI). It covers how AI impacts copyright and patent law, infringement risks, and AI's effects on IP across various educational disciplines. The presentation concludes with guidance for addressing IP issues when establishing AI policies and best practices for academic integrity and innovation.
Session Leaders: Ashley Sloat, President, Director of Patent Strategy, Aurora Consulting;
Mallory King, Trademark Attorney, Owner, Breathe Brand Protection
Facilitator: Caroline Schaefer-Hills
Location: Health Science 116

Me, Myself, And AI: Finding Efficiencies With AI In Your Daily Work
This interactive session brings together NMC staff and faculty to explore and share best practices for integrating AI into daily work. Focusing on practical applications, participants will exchange innovative ideas for leveraging AI to enhance efficiency, streamline workflows, and support student success. A core component of the discussion will be dedicated to safeguarding student data privacy while utilizing AI tools, ensuring compliance with institutional policies and ethical guidelines. Come prepared to share your experiences, learn from your colleagues, and collectively shape the future of responsible and respectful use of AI at NMC. (Description written with the help of Gemini AI)
Session Leaders: Lindsey Dickinson, NMC Director of Student Success & Retention; Lisa vonReichbauer, NMC Director of Admissions
Location: Health Science 216

Leveling Up With AI: Smarter Strategies For Knowledge Work
Already using AI? This session goes further. Learn how to design custom prompts, explore advanced features, chain AI tasks together, and apply AI to more complex problems like grant writing, student support, and data cleanup. Attendees will have the opportunity to practice and learn these skills during this session.
Session Leader: Ken Dirkin, Senior Director, Michigan Virtual Learning Research Institute
Facilitator: Alison Thornton
Location: Les Biederman 35/37 (Computer Lab)

Session Four
2:25 - 3:00 p.m. - Part One: Departmental Meeting
3:00 - 3:20 p.m. - Part Two: College-wide Zoom Meeting

(Room Assignments)   **(Group Slides)**   **(Zoom link)**

Learning In Action: Applying AI In Your Area, Department, Or Work Cohort
The purpose of this session and debrief is to give staff and faculty time to reflect on their learning from the AI sessions, exchange insights with colleagues, and connect those ideas to their own work.

Part One:
- Staff will identify specific, practical ways to apply generative AI in their roles, while also discussing the resources, tools, and training needed to effectively use AI for greater efficiency, planning, and impact in their departments.

- Faculty will consider whether their area needs additional norms/guidelines for AI use. Faculty are also asked to discuss the draft strategic plan, which calls for preparing learners for "a rapidly changing world through purposeful pathways, durable skills, and technology literacy."

Part Two: Jason Slade, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives; and President Nick Nissley join faculty and staff via Zoom. Jason will facilitate as faculty and staff share their learning and ideas.. **At least one person in each group should bring a laptop with a camera for the Zoom call.**

Fall Fest Connections and Corn Hole Tournament
TJN Innovation Center
3:20 - 4:00 p.m.

Join us for fall refreshments and a chance to connect with each other. After you've fueled up, join our corn hole tournament for some friendly competition!

About the Panel:
Moderator: Terri Gustafson, NMC Director of Academic Affairs
Panelists:

- Danelle Brostrom, Ed Tech Coach - TCAPS
- Sam Charnes - Associate Vice Provost of Education Operations, Research and Technology - Interlochen Center for the Arts
- Michael Saad - CIO, Munson Medical Center (to be confirmed)
- Miloš Topić - Vice President for IT and Chief Digital Officer - GVSU
- Ryan Voge, VP of Data and Decision Science - Hagerty

AI In Action Panel Biographies:

Moderator:
Terri Gustafson is Director of Academic Affairs and Educational Technology at Northwestern Michigan College. Dr. Gustafson oversees online course development, LMS administration, instructional design and faculty development, classroom and conference technology (including Active Learning renovations), and video/media services. With 25 years of experience in distance learning and instructional technology, she has served as Past President of the Educational Technology Organization of Michigan and on the Instructional Technology Council Board. In April 2024, her role expanded to include curriculum approval and review, course and program assessment, academic scheduling, and record keeping for faculty and curriculum processes.

Panelists:
Danelle Brostrom is a seasoned educational leader with a diverse background that includes teaching, leadership, and curriculum development. As a K-12 Educational Technology Coach for Traverse City Area Public Schools, she specializes in guiding educators to effectively integrate technology into their practice. Danelle is a distinguished EdSafe Women in AI International Fellow, and was named one of ISTE's "20 to Watch in 2023." Her professional roles include serving on the Board of Directors for MACUL, co-creating the WIREDTC EdTech Conference, and co-hosting the TCAPS Loop Weekly Podcast. A respected expert in AI, digital wellness, and technology ethics, Danelle has a particular passion for making our connected world a safer, kinder, more balanced, and better-informed place.

Samantha Charnes serves as Associate Vice Provost for Education Operations, Research and Technology at Interlochen Center for the Arts, leading initiatives that enhance student success and optimize organizational performance. As co-chair of Interlochen's Artificial Intelligence Advisory Committee, she also helps guide the strategic integration of AI to support academic and arts programs at Interlochen, fostering innovation and efficiency across the institution.

Michael Saad currently serves as the Vice President & Chief Information Officer, Munson Healthcare. Michael is a nationally recognized technology leader with over 20 years of experience driving enterprise innovation. As CIO at Munson Healthcare, he leads AI governance, analytics modernization, and platform strategy. He previously held senior roles at The University of Tennessee Medical Center and Henry Ford Health System. Michael serves on the CNBC Technology Executive Council and is a Becker's "Top CIO to Know." He advises on statewide AI policy and frequently speaks on digital transformation, cybersecurity, and responsible AI.

Miloš Topić has over 25 years of experience in leadership, technology, innovation, strategy, and operations. His experiences range from startups to Fortune 1000 companies, to contributing across multiple universities over the past two decades. In his current role as Vice President and Chief Digital Officer, Miloš' responsibilities include customer experience; business development and product design; project and portfolio management; information security; network and system engineering and administration as well as programming and development. Miloš received his BS in computer science, MS in Information Systems, MBA and Ph.D. in Business Administration. He is responsible for elevating enterprise digital capabilities; reimagining online learning; strengthening information security; improving academic research computing services; leading change, growth, and innovation across the University. Currently, his primary focus is on growing and strengthening the IT division; leading the implementation of GVSU's digital roadmap; standardizing and enhancing our online learning capabilities, tools and technologies while

enabling progress, growth, and modernization across all major areas in partnership with other key areas of the University.

Ryan Voge serves as Vice President of Data and Decision Science at Hagerty. In this role, he leads the delivery of a broad spectrum of analytics solutions from dynamic self-service dashboards to AI/ML automation for business teams across the enterprise from marketing and sales to claims. Ryan brings nearly 20 years of experience in personal auto insurance, where he has led analytics for pricing, reserving, product, claims, financial planning and analysis, reinsurance and more. He served as Director of Claims Analytics as well as other strategic roles during his 10+ years at USAA and spent over five years in the insurance start-up space. In 2018, Ryan joined General Motors (GM) to create the business case for General Motors Insurance, built a multi-faceted partnership with American Family and led analytics including the deployment of a proprietary connected-vehicle telematics score. Additionally, Ryan served as the Chief Actuary at Star & Shield Insurance Services, a reciprocal start-up domiciled in Florida. Ryan is a Fellow of the Casualty Actuarial Society and Member of the American Academy of Actuaries. He holds a Master of Computer Science in Data Science from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and a Bachelor of Science in Quantitative Economics from Weber State University.

Session Leader Biographies:

Carolyn Andrews is the Construction Technology Program Coordinator at Northwestern Michigan College. She earned her B.A.A. in Interior Design and Construction Management from Central Michigan University and is currently pursuing her M.A. in Design, Learning, and Technology, also at Central Michigan University. Much of her previous professional experience was in the interior design industry, specializing in kitchen and bath design. This past summer, with support from the foundation, Carolyn was able to purchase a 3D concrete printer!

Ryan Bernstein is the Curriculum & Instructional Designer and an adjunct Communications instructor at Northwestern Michigan College. He holds a BA in Education from Western Michigan University and a MALS from the University of Denver. He has worked in K-12 and higher education settings and has also worked as a technical writer in the technology industry. Additionally, Ryan is a multiple Osterlympics medal winner and reigning, back-to-back NMC Golf League champion.

Skylar Berry has been employed by NMC for four years and currently serves as an NMC Financial Aid Specialist. He received his Associate of Arts in Liberal Studies from Mid Michigan College. Skylar has previously worked in the IT field. As a technology enthusiast, Skylar uses generative AI in multiple facets of both his work and personal life.

Shaun Bertrand has over 25 years of experience in the information security field, has maintained his CISSP certification since 2004, and is proficient in risk management, obfuscation, social engineering, exploit development, critical systems protection, endpoint security, event management, incident response, intrusion detection, ICS/SCADA, and malware prevention. Shaun has experience teaching security classes at various universities and is a frequent speaker at security conferences. He is also part of the Hacker Hall of Fame at Constant Contact, Evernote, and Symantec. He is a member of the Michigan Cyber Civilian Corp (MiC3) and founder and president of the Grand Traverse ISSA chapter.

Danelle Brostrom is a seasoned educational leader with a diverse background that includes teaching, leadership, and curriculum development. As a K-12 Educational Technology Coach for Traverse City Area

Public Schools, she specializes in guiding educators to effectively integrate technology into their practice. Danelle is a distinguished EdSafe Women in AI International Fellow, and was named one of ISTE's "20 to Watch in 2023." Her professional roles include serving on the Board of Directors for MACUL, co-creating the WIREDTC EdTech Conference, and co-hosting the TCAPS Loop Weekly Podcast. A respected expert in AI, digital wellness, and technology ethics, Danelle has a particular passion for making our connected world a safer, kinder, more balanced, and better-informed place.

Samantha Charnes serves as Associate Vice Provost for Education Operations, Research and Technology at Interlochen Center for the Arts, leading initiatives that enhance student success and optimize organizational performance. As co-chair of Interlochen's Artificial Intelligence Advisory Committee, she also helps guide the strategic integration of AI to support academic and arts programs at Interlochen, fostering innovation and efficiency across the institution.

Mark DeLonge is the Assistant Director of Instructional Technology at Northwestern Michigan College. He works closely with faculty to develop courses and solutions to their teaching and tech needs. Mark earned his BA in Education and his MA in Educational Technology from Michigan State University. He worked as an elementary school teacher for 7 years, and during the summer can be found driving one of his two VWs

Lindsey Dickinson began her career at NMC in Summer 2011 when she returned as an alumnus to work in international admissions. She held various roles at NMC, including International Admissions Recruiter and Advisor, Coordinator of the TCAPS Early College Program, Director of Advising, Osterlympics medal winner, and now serves as the Director of Student Success & Retention. Her belief is that AI can help us find efficiencies and declutter our lives almost as well as Marie Kondo, but that, ultimately, nothing is a replacement for good old-fashioned human beings.

Ken Dirkin is the Senior Director of the Michigan Virtual Learning Research Institute (MVLRI), where he leads innovation efforts at the intersection of technology, policy, and learning. As founding director of Michigan Virtual's AI Lab, Ken guides statewide initiatives focused on integrating generative AI into K-12 education, helping schools navigate the future of teaching and learning. Known for translating big ideas into practical strategies, Ken facilitates conversations that challenge assumptions, spark curiosity, and equip educators to lead boldly in a rapidly evolving digital world.

Brandon Everest has taught social sciences, and sociology in particular, for 25 years at NMC after leaving a career in social work. He has learned about and implemented whole-course/embedded service learning and other experiential and reflective techniques during that time. He has gained certifications, including from the Institute of Experiential Learning, which works directly with Alice and David Kolb, who are central figures in experiential learning in higher education. This led to current work as a faculty co-director for the NMC Experiential Learning Institute. Brandon has been an early adopter of technology innovations throughout his career, but struggles, along with everyone else, about what AI and recent developments mean for us, our learners and the systems and traditions that support us.

Jennifer Ewing has been practicing human resources, health and safety management for over thirty-four years in both union and non-union environments. She currently works for Human Resource Partners where she provides human resource outsourcing to support the people side of business. She is certified as both a Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR) and a Senior Certified Professional through the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM-SCP). She has an MBA from Michigan State University and her BSBA from Central Michigan University. Additionally, she has been an adjunct professor for over twenty-two years and enjoys passing along her experience and knowledge to her students and others. She teaches

through Davenport University's Maine College of Business, the Center for Advanced Legal Studies, and Northwestern Michigan College. Jennifer is also the Program Manager at Claremont Lincoln University. Jennifer is the 2024 recipient of the prestigious MiSHRM Human Resources Lifetime Achievement Award.

Kenneth G. Hartman is the founder and principal investigator at Lucid Truth Technologies, a Michigan-based digital private investigation and eDiscovery firm serving civil and criminal litigation nationwide. He is a licensed digital private investigator and internationally recognized cybersecurity expert specializing in computer, mobile network, and cloud forensics. He holds a BS in Electrical Engineering from Michigan Technological University and an MS in Information Security Engineering from the SANS Technology Institute, complemented by multiple certifications. In his work with the Human Resilience Project, Ken integrates his technical expertise with evidence-based frameworks that cultivate mental resilience, ethical reflection, emotional intelligence, and meaning-making in the face of rapid AI-driven change. He has delivered sessions such as "Dealing with the Deluge of Digital Discovery, Leveraging AI to Tackle Modern Legal Challenges," helping lawyers adapt to evolving digital discovery landscapes.

Kate Hogan is a human resource leader with more than 15 years of talent and organizational development experience at Hagerty. She currently serves as vice president of learning and development, where she designs and executes training and talent development strategies, develops management and leadership development, and leads employee engagement initiatives. During her leadership, Hagerty has been recognized for three consecutive years on FORTUNE's Great Place to Work® list; Kate has also championed Hagerty's inclusion in Training Magazine's Top 125 training organizations. Kate has a BS from Northern Michigan University in health education and business management, in addition to certifications from the Center for Creative Leadership's Leadership Development Program, Situational Leadership and Situational Leadership Self, and the University of Michigan's Management of Managers. Kate has served as a representative for the State of Michigan's Talent Investment Board and Traverse City TEDx Advisory Board.

Pat Kawula has been working in IT for over 10 years. From desktop support to information security, he has seen a great deal of problems. In his current role as Information Security Analyst at Northwestern Michigan College, his primary goal is to make everyone too scared to open an email ever again. In the meantime, he helps ensure the data that is entrusted to the College is as safe as it can be.

Malory King is the owner of Breathe Brand Protection, PLLC, a boutique law firm specializing in brand protection legal services, including trademarks, copyrights, and contracts. Mallory is passionate about helping entrepreneurs and small business owners protect, defend, and navigate their intellectual property rights. Mallory grew up around the corner from NMC's campus and is thrilled to be presenting at the conference this fall.

Chris Linsell is an alumnus of Northwestern Michigan College and the Director of Content at Luxury Presence, where he leads strategy at the intersection of real estate, technology, and storytelling. With a career spanning content, education, and brand leadership, Chris has built a reputation for challenging industry orthodoxies and pushing professionals to think differently about how they connect with audiences. His work explores not just what AI can do but what it cannot, raising provocative questions about where human skillsets offer unreplicable value and how that connects to the growing reach of machine intelligence. Chris has spoken to thousands of professionals across North America, guiding them to adopt technology as a competitive advantage. Chris's mix of sharp insight, storytelling flair, and willingness to challenge conventional wisdom makes him a distinctive voice in today's AI conversation.

Janet Lively is NMC's part-time faculty director of the Center for Instructional Excellence. She has been an instructor in the Communications Area since 2005, teaching composition, technical writing, and college success. Janet became a teacher after a career as a journalist. She has a B.S. in Agriculture and Natural Resources Communications from Michigan State and an M.A. in Creative Writing from SUNY Brockport.

Kristy McDonald is an experiential educator and Co-Director of the Experiential Learning Institute at Northwestern Michigan College, where she specializes in professional communication, interpersonal communication, mindfulness, marketing, and customer service. She began her career at the college in 2006 as a career and employment advisor before joining the faculty in 2011. In her role, she strives to expand and support experiences that help students connect their learning to real-world contexts, preparing them for success both academically and professionally. Kristy earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Montana and a master's degree from Eastern Michigan University.

Leah Melichar serves as the Northwest Michigan Works! Regional Director for Training and Development, where she oversees training and development for the agency's staff. She also oversees workforce programming that provides job seekers with support and resources to obtain employment. Prior to joining Northwest Michigan Works, Leah served as Lansing Community College's Director of K-12 Operations from 2020-2023 where she provided administrative leadership for dual credit programs for high school students, oversaw LCC's Lansing Promise scholarship program, and directed the Coalition for College Readiness initiative. Leah spent 10 years at Ferris State University collaborating with high schools and career tech centers to provide college credit opportunities to high school students across the state. Leah holds a B.A. in Communication from Berry College in Rome, GA. She earned her M.S. in Sports Administration from Georgia State, and has completed coursework in Ferris State's Doctorate of Community College Leadership program.

Kyle Morrison is NMC's Coordinator of Media & Instructional Technologies and the NMC Director of eSports. Kyle leads the classroom technology and digital media staff within the Educational Technology Department, responsible for designing, installing, maintaining, and educating on all classroom technologies. Kyle's team also manages all video production, distribution, and conferencing, including live stream events and television broadcasts. Kyle received his BS in Information Technology and his MS in Cybersecurity from Eastern Michigan University. He also teaches as adjunct faculty in the NMC Audio Technology program.

Nicco Pandolfi is an instruction librarian at Northwestern Michigan College. He holds a B.A. in History and Environmental Studies from Denison University and an M.S. in Information Science from the University of Michigan. He has worked in food systems, public libraries, academic libraries, and archives, and has a longstanding interest in commons-based alternatives to intellectual property law in contexts ranging from agricultural seed stocks to creative works.

Kristen Salathiel has taught English and College Success at NMC for twenty-five years. Before that, she taught high school for ten years. She loves teaching and learning and wants to help vulnerable students see that with hard work and good strategies, they can be successful college students. When not teaching, she loves traveling the world.

Clyde Sheets is the Director of Interdisciplinary Arts at Interlochen Center for the Arts. Clyde has worked in performance and events as a musician, director, producer, designer and production manager, as well as a career in education. Clyde has a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Stage Directing and Sculpture from Central

Michigan University and a Master of Fine Arts in Design and Production from San Francisco State University.

Ashley Sloat is a USPTO-registered patent practitioner with a Ph.D. in biomedical sciences from the University of Michigan. She specializes in building and managing patent portfolios for startups and emerging growth companies across a wide range of technologies, including Artificial Intelligence. Ashley partners closely with engineering and executive teams to align IP strategy with business goals—maximizing portfolio value while minimizing legal costs. She is a frequent host of the Patently Strategic Podcast, serves on the Board of Directors for 20Fathoms, and was named to Traverse City Business News' 2024 40 Under 40. Ashley leads Aurora Patents, serving clients nationwide and internationally.

Melissa Sprenkle has been teaching college writing, literature, and linguistics courses since she began her graduate work in the fall of 1988. Throughout her academic career she has presented at many conferences and published articles on topics ranging from the rhetoric of merrymaking in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, personal experience narratives of women convicted of murder, decomposing bodies in Old English poetry and sermons, and machete discourse in gendered representations of contemporary yard work. Since beginning work at NMC, Dr. Sprenkle has helped develop and run a homelessness writing workshop and has offered experiential learning opportunities for students in her writing classes by working with the NMC Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week project.

Sherry Trier has worked at NMC for 16 years. Her current role is Instructional Technology Specialist within the EdTech department. As part of the Ed Tech team, Sherry received the NMC Team Excellence Award in 2021. She has 10 years' experience working with accessibility.

Rachel Wilczewski has been a full-time Sociology instructor at NMC since 2015. She views her role as helping students understand what AI is, what it can and cannot do, and to think about the many social and ethical considerations of the AI revolution. Rachel has recently integrated GenAI into some of her coursework.

Kerrey Woughter has been an educator since 1996, when she began teaching biology in Flint, Michigan. In 2004, she earned her Master's of Library and Information Science, moved to Traverse City, and began her 15-year career as the teacher-librarian at TC-Central High School. She earned a Master's of Organizational Management in 2007. In 2019, Kerrey finally "graduated from high school" and came to NMC, where she has served as Director of Library Services since.

Thank you for sharing this special day with us!

Northwestern Michigan College