



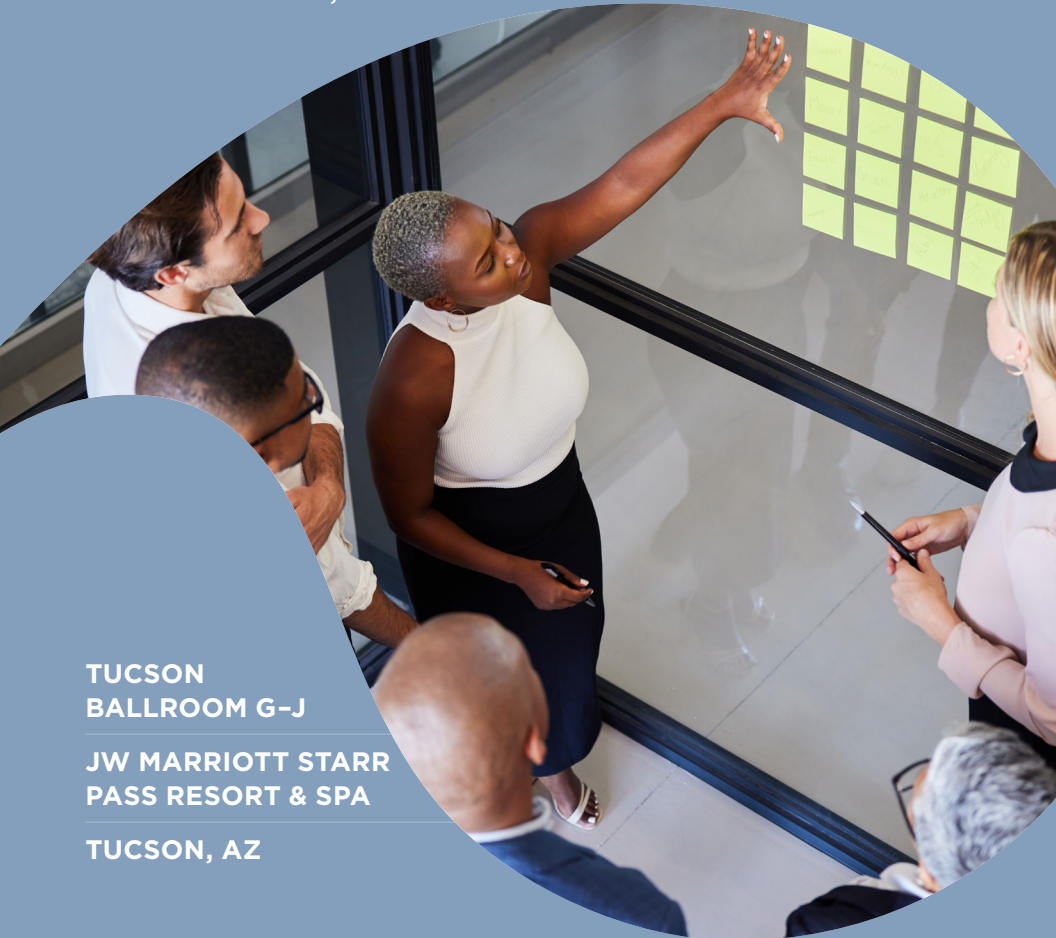
Forum on Transformational Leadership

APRIL 15-16, 2026

TUCSON
BALLROOM G-J

JW MARRIOTT STARR
PASS RESORT & SPA

TUCSON, AZ



WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15

12:00-1:15 P.M.

FORUM BADGE PICKUP

LOCATION: CLASS REGISTRATION DESK

1:15-1:30 P.M.

WELCOME REMARKS

- » **Kathryn Enke**, Vice President for Leadership and Strategy, AAC&U

1:30-2:30 P.M.

SESSION 1 | LEADING WITH COURAGE AND CARE

- » **Kathryn Enke**, Vice President for Leadership and Strategy, AAC&U (moderator)
- » **Georgina Dodge**, Vice President for Belonging, University of Maryland
- » **Dolores Durán-Cerda**, Former Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Pima Community College
- » **John Pollard**, Franke Dean of the W.A. Franke Honors College, University of Arizona
- » **Rebecca Ropers**, Executive Vice Chancellor & Provost, University of Minnesota Duluth

Courageous care combines deep kindness with honest truth-telling, and involves engaging in civil, respectful dialogue about challenging topics while maintaining unwavering commitment to learning and student success. Leading with courage and care requires making difficult ethical decisions that prioritize student and educator well-being, even when these choices are uncomfortable or unpopular.

And, it calls for exploring powerful possibilities for collaboration across institutional silos and leveraging digital innovation to enhance human connection.

In this session, courageous and caring leaders will share their perspectives on leadership that authentically prioritizes student and educator learning, well-being, belonging, and success. Panelists will seek to inspire forum participants to leadership futures that reimagine campus cultures and structures and promote shared stewardship of vibrant and transformational educational experiences.

2:45–3:45 P.M.

SESSION 2 | “IF THEY ONLY KNEW...”: HELPING YOUR WORK BE SEEN, VALUED, AND SUPPORTED

- » **Tammy Moore**, Interim Vice President of Marketing and Communications, Hollins University
- » **Heather Pieper-Olson**, Vice President for Institutional Advancement, College of Saint Benedict

Academic leaders are increasingly expected to articulate the value of their work and engage external audiences, often without clear frameworks for partnering with marketing and advancement colleagues. This interactive session offers leaders space to strengthen how they lead, communicate, and influence across their institutions.

Drawing on experience in institutional advancement, marketing, and communications, the presenters will clarify how these functions support institutional mission and explore how collaborative partnerships can amplify academic priorities and impact. Participants will work through a practical framework for translating academic vision, goals, and successes into compelling narratives that invite engagement, collaboration, and support.

4:00–5:00 P.M.

SESSION 3 | AI TRANSFORMATION: BUILDING AN AI-EMPOWERED LEADERSHIP TEAM

» **Shankar Prasad**, Chief Strategy Officer, Carnegie

Artificial intelligence is reshaping the strategic, operational, and academic core of higher education. Institutions that empower their teams with AI will outperform those that don't—yet many remain stuck in pilots without a comprehensive plan. This session shares a practical framework for an AI-empowered cabinet—aligning presidents, provosts, enrollment, student success, finance/operations, IT, and advancement around a responsible, institution-wide roadmap. Participants leave with a short list of next steps to move from experimentation to scalable impact, prepared for both the *now* and the *next*.

5:00–6:30 P.M.

NETWORKING RECEPTION

LOCATION: ANIA TERRACE



THURSDAY, APRIL 16

9:00–9:15 A.M.

FRAMING REMARKS

- » **Kathryn Enke**, Vice President for Leadership and Strategy, AAC&U

9:15–10:15 A.M.

SESSION 4 | FROM HOPE TO ACTION: ACTIVATING VALUES-BASED LEADERSHIP IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- » **Melissa May**, Deputy Director of the Voyager Scholarship Program, Obama Foundation
- » **Risa Pieters**, Deputy Director of Global Programs and Asia-Pacific Lead, Obama Foundation

The Obama Foundation seeks to build an active democratic culture where people are equipped and motivated to make change in the communities where they live, work, and play. The foundation created the Hope to Action Values Framework as a set of values that anyone, anywhere, can put into play to build trust, activate participation, and expand opportunity in their community. Within this session, the presenters will introduce Hope to Action Values and encourage higher education leaders to put these values into action.

THANK YOU TO OUR FORUM SPONSOR

CARNEGIE

10:15–10:45 A.M.

NETWORKING BREAK

10:45–11:45 A.M.

SESSION 5 | ADVANCING PUBLIC TRUST IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- » **Jeremy C. Young**, Senior Advisor for Strategic Initiatives, AAC&U
- » **Felicia Fullilove**, Associate Director of Advancing Public Trust, AAC&U
- » **Kathryn Enke**, Vice President for Leadership and Strategy, AAC&U

Higher education has become a flashpoint in political discourse; its curricula have been scrutinized, its values questioned, its funding reduced, and its autonomy circumscribed. Alongside these escalating challenges, public trust in higher education has plummeted. In response, AAC&U launched Advancing Public Trust in Higher Education (APT), a major new initiative to promote the



democratic mission of higher education by strengthening public trust. APT aims to unite higher education, business, and civil society leaders around a shared purpose, communicate the value of a college education in compelling ways, and highlight liberal education as central to preparing students for a healthy democracy.

APT is built around leaders and the work of leadership. That work includes providing support, training, and resources for college and university leaders to guide their institutions through today's uniquely challenging landscape; crafting messages and opportunities to convey higher education's value to a skeptical public; and organizing efforts and spaces that promote and defend liberal education. Within this session, APT co-leaders will share the aims of APT and engage attendees in conversation on practical strategies for rebuilding public trust.

11:45 A.M. TO NOON

CLOSING REMARKS

» **Kathryn Enke**, Vice President for Leadership and Strategy, AAC&U





JOIN THE CONVERSATION

#AACULEAD



@AACU



/AACandU



/company/aacu



@aacu.org

LEARN MORE

About AAC&U's Resources
for Leadership Development
and Support



aacu.org/leadership