

IGEN 2025 - Day 1

10:00 - Welcome

Whitney Thompson, Deputy Director for Workforce Education

Dr. Brian Durham - is the Executive Director of the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), holding that post since 2018. He brings over 26 years of experience to the role, most of it at the state level. As the Executive Director, Dr. Durham works with his Board to provide coordination and oversight of the state's 39 community college districts. He also works in close partnership with Governor Pritzker's Education Team, the Board of Higher Education, the State Board of Education, and members of the Illinois General Assembly, as well as the Council of Community College Presidents and the Illinois Community College Trustees Association. He also serves on a variety of statewide Boards and Commissions.

Dr. Durham holds an Ed.D. in Education Policy, Organization and Leadership from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, an MA in Political Science from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, and a BA in Political Science from the University of Evansville.

Dr. Michael Boyd - Dr. Michael Boyd was named KCC's seventh president in 2019. Firmly committed to community service, Boyd is engaged with numerous efforts including the Economic Alliance of Kankakee County, United Way, Kiwanis, the Kankakee Area Regional Vocational Education System and the Kankakee Grundy Livingston Workforce Board. Boyd has served as a peer reviewer for the Higher Learning Commission, chairperson of the Manteno Chamber of Commerce, president of the Illinois Council of Chief Academic Officers, and president of the Illinois Council of Community College Administrators.

He joined KCC's staff in 2014 as vice president for instructional and student success, the college's chief academic officer. Before arriving at KCC, he worked at Illinois Central College, most recently as associate dean of English, humanities, and language studies. He has three degrees from Illinois State University: a bachelor's degree in English education, a master's degree in English studies and a doctorate in English studies.

10:45 - KCC and Gotion Partnership Panel

Dr. Gina Greene is the Director of Continuing Education and Business Partnerships at Kankakee Community College. Dr. Greene has over 20 years of professional experience building strategic partnerships and facilitating impactful training programs in healthcare, education and industry. In addition to her professional work, Dr. Greene recently completed an eight-year term as a dedicated member of her local school board, where she contributed to shaping policies that support community health and education. Dr.

Greene holds a Doctorate of Education in Public Health Policy from Nebraska Methodist College.

Alicia Settles is the Corporate Trainer in the Continuing Education and Business Partnerships department at Kankakee Community College. Alicia attended Purdue University and holds undergraduate degrees focused on Neuroscience and Motivation and graduate degrees in Industrial-Organizational Psychology and Human Factors Engineering. Alicia's professional background includes experience in healthcare, research, data analysis, and manufacturing. Alicia is dedicated to creating engaging learning experiences that foster growth, enhance skills, and contribute to individual and team long-term success.

Mohamad Ali Zeitoun - Director of Eng Manufacturing, a seasoned professional with over 15 years of management and startup experience, currently serving as a leader in Manufacturing Engineering at Gotion Inc. He holds a degree from Arizona State University and has a proven track record of launching innovative products in the automotive and clean energy sectors, with experience at industry giants like Tesla. Mohamad played a pivotal role in establishing Gotion's first 40 GWh Gigafactory in the U.S., located in Manteno, IL, driving a \$2 billion investment which is creating 2,600 jobs. His expertise spans site selection, strategic partnerships, and operational planning, with a deep focus on sustainability and electric vehicle technology. Mohamad is a well-networked leader, passionate about advancing battery technology and renewable energy solutions.

Andrew Wheeler - Head of Public Relations, a Kankakee, Illinois native, has left an indelible mark on local governance and business since founding B2B Magazine in 2003. Serving as Kankakee County Board Chairman from 2016 to 2024, he spearheaded economic development, approved over 50 solar projects, and rescued the county from financial ruin while modernizing critical infrastructure. Wheeler, dubbed "The Tree Hugging Republican," transitioned to Head of Public Relations at Gotion Inc. in October 2024, after years as Vice President of Marketing for Van Drunen Farms. A 2010 Governors State University MA graduate and 2013 KCC "Fab 50" honoree, Wheeler reflects on his luck in aligning county stability with a high-tech community project, now maximizing opportunities for both company and community.

11:30 - Energy Efficiency Resources Panel (Tim)

Kindy Kruller

Rimjhim Agrawal

Terisa Lingafelter

Ian McAdams

12:15 - Lunch

1:30 - New Zealand Exchange Participant Panel

Curt Renfield, Executive Director, Work Ready Program Development and Innovation at Heartland Community College

Paul Carlson, Dean – Business, Technology and Human Services at Kankakee Community College. This year marks his 25 years at KCC!

James Stafford, adjunct professor at KCC since 2018, full-time assistant professor and program coordinator in January 2024.

John Skupien, Associate Professor and Department Chair. He has been with Rock Valley since 2008.

Don Sykora, Instructor/Chair of Morton College Automotive Technology. A lifetime in the automotive industry and 21 years as full-time faculty at Morton

2:45 - Brainstorming

3:15 - Illinois EPA - Education and Environmental Justice Resources

Eli Dollarhide, Environmental Education Coordinator at the Illinois EPA

Paulina Lopez-Santos, Environmental Justice Policy Administrator at the Illinois EPA

4:00 - KCC Campus Tour with Dr. Boyd and Paul Carlson

IGEN Day 2

8:30 – Coffee and Zengine help

9:00 - BYO Project at JJC

Maria Anna Rafac is an architect, educator, activist, wife, and mother of five.

Since 1997, Maria has been dedicated to her students as professor of Architecture and Sustainability, Academic Advisor for the Architectural Studies Program, and club advisor for the American Institute of Architecture Students at JJC. She is a registered Architect and has worked for several architectural firms and in private practice over the past 35 years.

In 2010, Maria became Joliet Junior College's first Sustainability Coordinator working with students, faculty, staff, administration, and the community on sustainability initiatives and related issues. She serves as the co-affiliate for IGEN and as the chair of the South Metropolitan Higher Education Consortium's SMHEC Sustainability Initiatives Committee.

In the community, Maria has served in several roles with Will County Regional Sustainability Network, Will County Green Town, on the Environmental Commission for the City of Joliet, and as the chair of the city's Water Conservation Subcommittee.

Ash Kinder is a student at Joliet Junior College who has earned her Associates of Science degree with a biology specialization but is continuing to take classes to further her education at a more attainable price. Ash is the Sustainability Campus Intern at JJC and has worked in the Office of Sustainability since August 2022, coordinating meetings, events, and volunteer opportunities for JJC Students, Faculty, Staff, and the extended community.

She is an environmentalist by passion, working to be the change, advocating for a circular economy, and achieving sustainability goals. She wants to see non-partisan environmental policies be put into place to hold the largest polluters accountable and encourages others to think about their impact on the environment in their daily lives at the college utilizing Office of Sustainability Initiatives such as the B.Y.O. Pledge Campaign and Romeoville Repair Cafe.

9:45 - The GREEN Program

Sumie Song, (she/her/hers), Ph.D., is Director of Strategic Partnerships at The GREEN Program, an award-winning experiential education abroad organization focused on the world's most pressing sustainable development issues. As director, Sumie works with universities to integrate sustainability into the academic curriculum and promote the development of a diverse sustainability workforce. She is member of the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network Mission 4.7 and serves on the NAFSA Association of International Educators Member Engagement Committee.

Prior to joining The GREEN Program, Sumie served as Director of Global Education and Associate Professor at North Park University, where she oversaw Education Abroad programs and International Student and Scholar Support. Sumie is a recipient of the Fulbright IEA grant, an alumna of the American Academic Leadership Institute Senior Leadership Academy, and served 6 years on the Peer Corps of the Higher Learning Commission. She holds has a B.A. in Comparative Literature from Williams College and a Ph.D. from Duke University in German Studies.

10:30 - Break

10:45 - Energy Efficiency Planning (Brad)

Ryan Siegel

Todd Rusk

Lucy Williams

11:45 - Review what's due and see what's new!

12:30 - Wrap Up, Lunch and Zengine help