



**Strategic Horizon Network
Virtual Conference Center
January 30, 2026**

Navigating a New Era of Disruption and Resilience

Our Philosophy

Member institutions are the heart of the Strategic Horizon Network, a self-organized learning community focusing on organizational stretch, exploring new trends, and building capacity. Collaboration and leveraging the synergy of the Network to learn, build strength, and support institutional adaptation are its cornerstones.

The environment in which community colleges operate is changing at an ever-accelerating and increasingly complex rate. Social, technological, and political forces are fundamentally altering the educational landscape in ways that are not easily understood. The Strategic Horizon Network believes that unprecedented challenges require unconventional solutions that can only be found through uncommon learning.

Network Design Principles

1. **Anticipate disruption** by exploring innovation beyond the mainstream—spotting emerging patterns, signals, and trends ahead of the curve.
2. **Leverage adaptive culture** by drawing from dynamic organizational practices to evolve legacy models and drive innovation in programs, services, and systems.
3. **Apply an equity lens** to every learning opportunity—examining systemic impacts on students, employees, and communities to promote inclusive transformation.
4. **Cultivate a growth mindset** through team-based learning and cross-college collaboration that fuels bold thinking and accelerates change.
5. **Strengthen connection** by sustaining a trusted, supportive Network rooted in shared experience, fellowship, and mutual commitment.
6. **Deliver uncommon insights** via shared learning experiences beyond higher education.

Background

For years, community colleges have been quietly absorbing the shockwaves of unrelenting change—rising to meet the needs of local communities while navigating undercurrents of technological disruption, demographic shifts, and economic volatility. However, the pace and intensity of change have shifted. No longer can higher education claim to be on the periphery of innovation. With the advent of generative AI and the acceleration of personalized learning, community colleges stand at a pivotal juncture. The nature of change itself has transformed. What was once cyclical is now continuous. What was once predictable is now unrelentingly nonlinear. The challenge is no longer simply to keep up—it is to thrive in an environment where the ground keeps shifting.

Today's world can be described not just as volatile or uncertain, but as Brittle, Anxious, Nonlinear, and Incomprehensible (BANI). The systems we've long relied on—funding models, labor markets, even communication norms—are increasingly unstable or misaligned with new

realities. Layered onto this is the acceleration of artificial intelligence and automation, which are reshaping how work gets done, how learning is delivered, and what skills are valued in the economy.

For community colleges, this moment presents both immense pressure and profound possibility. On one hand, institutions face intensifying expectations: to reskill the workforce, close equity gaps, increase credential value, and support the mental health of students and staff—all while navigating financial uncertainty and enrollment shifts. On the other hand, the mission of community colleges—to provide accessible, relevant, and responsive education—has never been more aligned with what society needs.

But strategy alone is not enough. The emotional toll of constant disruption—on presidents, faculty, staff, and students—cannot be ignored. Burnout, decision fatigue, and organizational inertia threaten progress. To truly lead through this era, colleges must build institutional resilience that extends beyond technical fixes to include emotional intelligence, adaptability, and grounded leadership.

This year's Strategic Horizon Network virtual program explores these intersecting realities: the structural disruption of the external environment and the internal resilience required to navigate it. It challenges leaders to think differently about planning, agility, and well-being—not as competing priorities, but as essential, interdependent strategies. As the pace of change accelerates, the ability to sense, adapt, and sustain will define the institutions that not only survive, but lead with vision, clarity, and purpose.

This program will challenge us not just to frame and understand this current moment and anticipate what's next—but to work from a place of clarity, connection, and courage.

Learning Outcomes - At the conclusion of the program, participants will be able to:

1. **Analyze** the BANI (Brittle, Anxious, Nonlinear, Incomprehensible) framework and its implications for community college leadership in a rapidly evolving landscape.
2. **Interpret** labor market shifts and emerging workforce trends to evaluate how artificial intelligence and changing employer expectations are reshaping the relevance of credentials, career pathways, and institutional strategy.
3. **Apply** evidence-based resilience strategies to strengthen individual and organizational capacity for leading through ambiguity, sustaining well-being, and fostering a more human-centered institutional culture.

Please join us for a compelling combination of speakers that will provide a sense-making framework for the disruption and emotions we all feel at some level and explore tools for navigating the emotions associated with living in a time of ever-accelerating and unrelenting change and risk.

Friday, January 30, 2025

- **10:30-11:45 a.m. (EST) – *Navigating Chaos: A sense-making guide to a BANI world that doesn't make sense* - *Jamais Cascio & Bob Johansen*, the Institute for the Future**
Hear from the authors and futurists who will help us reframe BANI (Brittle, Anxious, Non-linear, and Incomprehensible) with “positive BANI” and sense-making strategies in a chaotic world.
- **Noon-1 p.m. (EST) – Break**
- **1:00-2:15 p.m. (EST) -*The Future of Work Is Fragmented. How Do We Stay Whole?* – *Matt Sigelman, Burning Glass Institute & Emma Seppälä, Yale University***
Explore the forces reshaping the modern workplace and how human-centered strategies can restore resilience in the face of accelerating disruption.