

Letter from the Director



It's my great pleasure to welcome you to the 2025 Frontiers of Business Conference at the beautiful Carolina Inn. Today you'll see the Frank Hawkins Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise doing one of the things it does best: bringing together business leaders, influential policymakers, and distinguished academics to discuss and dissect issues of great importance to business and society.

Frontiers is more than a business conference. It's the culmination of the Kenan Institute's Grand Challenge, an annual in-depth examination of a top-of-mind issue for corporate leaders with important implications for public policy.

Each year, with help from experts such as our Kenan Institute Distinguished Fellows, our Grand Challenge highlights thought leadership from the institute and UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School. All of this leads to Frontiers, where we foster dialogue among leaders with diverse viewpoints, experiences, and backgrounds.

This year, our Grand Challenge shines a spotlight on the skills gap—a challenge that affects both employees and employers. Workers whose skills are no longer in high demand may require retraining to fill positions that consistently need high-quality candidates. Our speakers and panelists will share research-backed approaches to address this challenge—helping ensure that businesses and the economy remain productive, competitive, and healthy.

To our event sponsors—Citizens Financial Group Inc., Fifth Third Bank, J.P. Morgan, myFutureNC, and UNC Executive Development—thank you for your support of Frontiers. We also deeply appreciate Bruce and Katie Van Saun for their generous support of our Kenan Institute Distinguished Fellows, as well as the Luther Hodges Scholars for their contributions toward today's event.

Thank you for spending the day with us as we continue our exploration of the skills gap.

We hope you enjoy the conference!

Paige Quimet

Executive Director
Frank H. Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise

About the Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise

The Frank Hawkins Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise develops and promotes innovative, market-based solutions to vital economic issues.

With the belief that private enterprise is the cornerstone of a prosperous and free society, the institute fosters the entrepreneurial spirit to stimulate economic prosperity and improve the lives of people in North Carolina, across the country, and around the world.

Established in 1985 by Frank Hawkins Kenan, the institute offers programs, conferences, and seminars that bring together high-profile business leaders, academic researchers, and policymakers.

The institute is supported through generous annual funding from the William R. Kenan Jr. Fund, public and private sector grants, corporate sponsorships, individual donations, and event fees.

The Grand Challenge Initiative

The Kenan Institute's annual Grand Challenge marks a concerted, yearlong effort to examine the most complex and timely issues facing business and the economy today. With the help of a hand-selected group of elite scholars and practitioners from various disciplines, we aim to develop a list of actionable recommendations in the form of written reports, workshops, webinars, and business roundtables. The culmination of these efforts is the Frontiers of Business Conference, which convenes cross-sector leaders from diverse backgrounds to share objective and evidence-based solutions while inspiring further collaboration and action.

This year's Grand Challenge centers on one of the most urgent issues facing the workforce today. US businesses face a growing skills gap, fueled by rapid technological change, shifting demographics, and evolving workplace cultures. Some jobs sit empty because qualified candidates are hard to find, while many workers discover their skills no longer match what employers need. America's skills gap affects both careers and competitiveness, which is why this year's Grand Challenge is focused on the country's widening divide—bringing fresh insights, forward-looking ideas, and data-driven guidance that inform policy, strengthen workforce capabilities, and drive economic growth.

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2025

The Carolina Inn • Chapel Hill, NC

FRONTIERS OF BUSINESS CONFERENCE

BRIDGING THE
SKILLS GAP
Aligning Workforce Skills with
Labor Market Demands

Corporate executives, top researchers, and policy leaders gather to examine the skills in demand and share objective, evidence-based solutions for bridging the gap.



FIFTH THIRD

J.P.Morgan



KENAN-FLAGLER BUSINESS SCHOOL
Executive Development



KENAN INSTITUTE
OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISE
UNC KENAN-FLAGLER BUSINESS SCHOOL



KENAN-FLAGLER
BUSINESS SCHOOL

Registration and Networking

8:00 AM | Colonnade | Breakfast Available

Welcome and Overview

9:00 AM | Hill Ballroom | **SPEAKER**
David Knowles, Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise
Paige Ouimet, Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise; UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School

The Skills Gap: Addressing a Complex Challenge

9:25 AM | Hill Ballroom | **PANELISTS**
Susan Cates, Leeds Illuminate
Senator Michael V. Lee, North Carolina General Assembly
Telly Tucker, Institute for Advanced Learning and Research
MODERATOR
Sekou Bermiss, UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School and 2025 Kenan Institute Distinguished Fellow

10:15 AM | Networking Break

Keynote | Bridging the Skills Gap With AI

10:45 AM | Hill Ballroom | **SPEAKER**
David Deming, Harvard College and 2025 Kenan Institute Distinguished Fellow

Technology Is Evolving: Can the Way We Work Follow?

11:15 AM | Hill Ballroom | **PANELISTS**
Elizabeth Faber, Deloitte
Ben Hoffman, Fifth Third Bank
MODERATOR
Camelia Kuhnen, Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise; UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School

Luncheon Keynote | From Investment to Impact: Will Enterprise AI Deliver?

12:00 PM | Chancellor's Ballroom | **SPEAKER**
Aaron "Ronnie" Chatterji, OpenAI; Duke University

1:30 PM | Networking Break

Breakout Sessions

Harnessing the Power of Training and Apprenticeship

1:45 PM | Hill Ballroom - South | **PANELISTS**
Chris Hage, Duke Energy Corporation
Chris Harrington, ApprenticeshipNC
MODERATOR
Annelies Goger, Brookings Institution and 2025 Kenan Institute Distinguished Fellow

Help Wanted: How Demographics Are Remaking the Labor Market

Hill Ballroom - North | **PANELISTS**
Timitra Hildebrand-Jones, Albemarle Corporation
Ari Medoff, Arosa
Tara Watson, Williams College; Brookings Institution
MODERATOR
Jeffrey Korzenik, Fifth Third Commercial Bank

2:30 PM | Networking Break - Refreshments Available

Breakout Sessions

Growing Your Own: Reskilling and Upskilling Within Companies

2:45 PM | Hill Ballroom - South | **PANELISTS**
Theresa Barber, SAS Institute
Suzie Bishop, The Center for Leadership Studies
Shanna Gibbons, J.P. Morgan Private Bank
MODERATOR
Gerald Cohen, Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise; UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School

The Other Gap: Reconnecting College Classrooms with the Workplace

Hill Ballroom - Central | **PANELISTS**
Jeffrey Cox, North Carolina Community College System
Cecilia Holden, myFutureNC
Beth Mayer-Davis, The Graduate School at UNC-Chapel Hill
MODERATOR
Thomas Stith, The Michael Thomas Group Inc.

Scalable Solutions: Expanding Skilled Training

Hill Ballroom - North | **PANELISTS**
Nora El-Khouri Spencer, Hope Renovations
Cathy Tyler, National Center for Construction Education and Research
MODERATOR
Betsy Conway, Lowe's Foundation

3:30 PM | Networking Break

Keynote | Purpose Meets Performance: How Citizens Aligns Philanthropy with Business Strategy

3:45 PM | Chancellor's Ballroom | **SPEAKER**
Daniel Fitzpatrick, Citizens Bank
MODERATOR
LaChaun Banks, Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise; UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School

Leadership, Innovation, and Agility: A Fireside Chat with Revlon CEO Michelle Peluso and UNC Kenan-Flagler Dean Mary Margaret Frank

This session is presented as part of the Dean's Speaker Series and made possible through the generous support of the Archie K. Davis Endowment.

4:15 PM | Chancellor's Ballroom | **SPEAKER**
Michelle Peluso, Revlon
MODERATOR
Mary Margaret Frank, UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School

Closing Remarks

5:00 PM | Chancellor's Ballroom | **John McCain**, Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise

Reception

5:10 PM | Old Well Ballroom

For full speaker bios, please visit: frontiers.unc.edu/skillsgap/speakers/

SCAN TO VIEW



Mark your calendars for the next Frontiers of Business Conference. October 8, 2026—The Carolina Inn.
Plus, we're just three months away from the 2026 Grand Challenge theme reveal. Stay tuned!