Schedule

Lunch
11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.
Marina Dining Hall

Music by UB Fusion Ensemble;
Directed by Russell Fisher

Afternoon Panels
12:50 p.m. – 3:10 p.m.
Littlefield Auditorium

12:50 -1:40 p.m.
University of Bridgeport Student Business Plan Pitch Competition
Moderator: Sherri Dente, Esq.

Panelists:
Dan Tenney, PhD ('20)
Gad Selig, DBA
Shannon Hashemi, DBA
Bill Moran ('74)
Art Landi ('75)

1:45 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Shaping the Future of Public Health: UB's Next Generation of Scholars – Online and On Ground
Moderator: Meredith Gaffney, MPH

Panelists:
Alisha Drabek, MPH ('24)
Shari McIntosh, MPH ('25)
Alexis Pudimat, MPH ('24)
Amamda Lounibos, MPH ('24)
Hillary Deane, MPH ('25)

2:35 p.m. - 3:10 p.m.
Overcoming Challenges and Building Foundations in the U.S. Job Market
Moderator: Lorraine Taylor ('76)

Panelists:
Saddam Alkhamaiesh, PhD ('24)
Dolly Balaji ('22)
Brittany Harris ('16)

12:50 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Visit the DADSS Demonstration Vehicle (Waldemere Hall)

Awards Ceremony and Closing Remarks
3:20 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.
9th Floor Tower Room

UB Provost Manyul Im, PhD

UB RISE Chair, Shannon Hashemi, DBA &
UB RISE Vice Chair, Meredith Gaffney, MPH

Faculty Competitive Awards
Sponsored by Mutual Security Credit Union, Henry Baum, Pres. and CEO

1st, 2nd, 3rd Place, Honorable Mention Awards
Sponsored by Barbara James ('74, '77) and Ajay Shrestha, PhD ('02, '06, '19)

Alumni Choice Awards
Sponsored by UB Alumni Association, Gordon Stier ('77)

Climate Innovation Award
Sponsored by Entrepreneurship Foundation, Mike Roer ('08)

Optimizing Business Profitability Through the Use of AI Award
Sponsored by Tradewinds Shopping Center Middletown, Drs. Shannon Hashemi, CMA & Al Daneshfar, CMA

Quantum Computing Applications Award
Sponsored by Dr. Khaled Elleithy, Dean of the College of Engineering, Business, Education

Reception
3:45 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
9th Floor Tower Room

Music by UB Fusion Ensemble;
Directed by Russell Fisher

Concurrent University Enrollment High School Participants
Special Programming

11:00 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.
Waldemere Hall/ABC

11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Concurrent Hands-On Experience

Group A: Learn to Code: LED User feedback (Limited to 25 students)

Group B: Data Assessment & Analysis (Limited to 35 students)

Group C: Demonstration Vehicle & UB's Robotic Dogs (Limited to 45 students)

11:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
Lunch
Littlefield Auditorium

12:20 p.m. - 12:35 p.m.
UB RISE HS Awards Ceremony

Afternoon Panels
Please scan the QR code or visit
bridgeport.edu/rise/speakers
to read the abstracts and each panelist's bio.

UB RISE was made possible because of our generous sponsors.

bridgeport.edu/rise/sponsorship

Alumni and Friends
Pina Demers
Barbara James '74, '77
Dr. Khaled Elleithy
Ajay Shestha, PhD '02, '06, '19
Gordon Stier '77
Lorraine Taylor '76

RESEARCH | INNOVATION | SCHOLARSHIP | ENTREPRENEURSHIP

UB RISE

FRIDAY, APRIL 4, 2025

8:30 A.M. - 4:30 P.M. | ARNOLD BERNHARD ARTS & HUMANITIES CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF BRIDGEPORT

For more information scan the QR code or visit www.bridgeport.edu/RISE

Welcome from the President

Danielle Wilken
President

It's no secret that UB RISE is my favorite time of year. As spring rolls around, I always look forward to our 15-year tradition of showcasing the best research, innovation, scholarship, and entrepreneurial ideas that our community has to offer. Talking with participants from University of Bridgeport, Goodwin University, and our Concurrent University Enrollment high schools about their projects fills me with incredible optimism about the future.

As you engage with the posters and their authors today, I know you'll feel that optimism, too. Students will discuss the intellectual merit of their poster topic, explain its potential to advance knowledge, and compete for prizes like the Climate Innovation Award, Quantum Computing Applications Award, and Business Pitch Competition, which have been generously sponsored by our alumni, advisory boards, and faculty. Faculty and staff will showcase their research and projects, highlighting community, business, and educational partnerships. Whether enrolled in health sciences or engineering, business or education, the arts or the sciences, WE are in the vanguard of global conversation.

One of the most important conversations right now is about the future of artificial intelligence. To further explore this topic, we have created a new award, "Optimizing Business Profitability Through the Use of Artificial Intelligence." There will be three winners for the most innovative ideas and best poster presentations on the topic. We are also excited to hear from keynote speaker Dr. Vahid Behzadan, and his talk on "The Landscape of AI Research: Opportunities, Challenges, and the Imperative of Safety."

Today perfectly encapsulates our mission to promote academic excellence, personal responsibility, and commitment to service. As our students prepare to enter the workforce, UB RISE will give them a running head start on success.

Keynote Speaker
The Landscape of AI Research: Opportunities, Challenges, and the Imperative of Safety

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming industries and reshaping the boundaries of innovation, from healthcare and finance to education and autonomous systems. This keynote will provide a high-level overview of the current state of AI research, highlighting major trends such as the rise of generative AI, the convergence of multimodal systems, and the deployment of AI at scale in real-world applications.

Vahid Behzadan, Ph.D
Assistant Professor of Computer Science and Data Science University of New Haven

Vahid Behzadan, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor of Computer Science and Data Science at the University of New Haven and the Director of the Secure and Assured Intelligent Learning (SAIL) Lab. His research focuses on AI safety, security, and the socioeconomic impacts of artificial intelligence. Dr. Behzadan actively participates in public discussions on AI and cybersecurity, and regularly provides commentary and insights to local, national, and international media. In 2023, he was an appointed member of the Connecticut AI Working Group, co-chaired by State Senator James Maroney. He is currently contributing to the establishment of the Connecticut AI Alliance (CAIA), a statewide consortium of universities, industry, and the public sector dedicated to advancing AI research, workforce development, and business innovation.

Special Thanks
Please scan the QR code or visit bridgeport.edu/rise/special-thanks to read our special thanks.

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Welcome from the UB RISE Chairs

Shannon Hashemi, DBA
UB RISE 2025 Chair

Meredith Gaffney, MPH
UB RISE, Vice-Chair

We are thrilled to welcome you to UB RISE 2025, University of Bridgeport's premier event celebrating **research, innovation, scholarship, and entrepreneurship.** This year, we focus on one of the most powerful and rapidly evolving technologies of our time — Artificial Intelligence (AI) — and how it is reshaping how we learn, work, and interact with the world.

At UB, we believe in pushing the boundaries of knowledge and preparing students to be leaders in a future shaped by technology. UB RISE reflects this commitment, providing a space where ideas come to life, research meets real-world application, and collaboration drives meaningful progress.

We are honored to have Dr. Vahid Behzadan as our keynote speaker, sharing his expertise on AI's growing role in society. From healthcare and business to education and creativity, AI is revolutionizing every industry — and today, we explore its possibilities together.

Whether you are here to present, learn, or connect, we encourage you to dive in, engage with new ideas, and embrace the spirit of exploration that makes UB RISE so special. Your participation is what fuels innovation and shapes the future.

Thank you for being part of this inspiring journey. **Welcome to UB RISE 2025 — where knowledge and technology come together to create tomorrow!**

Schedule

Registration
8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.
ABC 1st Floor Lobby

Welcome and Opening Remarks
9:05 a.m. - 9:15 a.m.
Littlefield Auditorium

Danielle Wilken, Ed.D.
UB President

Shannon Hashemi, DBA
UB RISE Committee Chair

Meredith Gaffney, MPH
UB RISE Committee Vice Chair

Poster Gallery Visit
9:15 a.m. — 10:45 a.m.
Schelfhaudt Gallery & ABC Lobby

Keynote Speaker
11:00 a.m. — 11:30 a.m.
Littlefield Auditorium

The Landscape of AI Research: Opportunities, Challenges, and the Imperative of Safety

Vadhid Behzadan, PhD
Assistant Professor, Computer Science and Data Science
University of New Haven