Schedule

Keynote Speaker
12:00 – 1:00 p.m.
John J. Cox Student Center Social Room

Culinary Medicine: A Path to Health for Self, Family and Community

Maria Asis, MD
Yale University School of Medicine, Clinical Instructor
Generations Obstetrics and Gynecology, Private Practice

Awards Ceremony and Closing Remarks
1:15 – 2:15 p.m.
John J. Cox Student Center Social Room

Kierstyn Hunter, Ph.D.
Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Kevin Kelliher, Ph.D. & Elizabeth Fles, Ph.D.
Chairs, UB RISE Committee

Undergraduate Awards | Master's Awards | Doctoral Awards

Awards are sponsored by UB alumni Gordon E. Stier, William Moran ('74), Lorraine Taylor ('76), Dolly Balaji ('22)

Optimizing Business Profitability Through the Use of AI Awards

*Sponsored by **Dr. Shannon Hashemi, CMA** and **Dr. Al Danessfar, CMA**, owners of Tradewinds Shopping Center in Middletown*

Quantum Computing Awards

*Sponsored by **Dr. Khaled Elleithy,** dean of the College of Engineering, Business, Education*

UB RISE 2026 Climate Challenge Awards

*Sponsored by **Mike Roer ('08)**, president of the Entrepreneurship Foundation*

Faculty Awards

*Sponsored by **Mutual Security Credit Union***

Reception
2:30 p.m.
John J. Cox Student Center Social Room

Music by UB Fusion Ensemble; Directed by Russell Fisher, DMA

Concurrent University Enrollment High School Participants
Special Programming
Carlson Hall Rm. 153

10:30 - 11:30 a.m.
Interdisciplinary Emerging Technology Lab Tour

11:30 - 11:35 a.m.
Break

11:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
"Green STEP Program" by **Alice Martin** of **United Illuminating**

12:00 - 12:15 p.m.
"Credit Union 101" by **Jeffrey R. Tracey ('15)**, COO/SVP of **Mutual Security Credit Union**

12:30 - 1:00 p.m.
Awards Ceremony

UB RISE was made possible because of our generous sponsors.

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RESEARCH | INNOVATION | SCHOLARSHIP | ENTREPRENEURSHIP

UB RISE











FRIDAY, APRIL 17, 2026

9 A.M. – 2 P.M. | JOHN J. COX CENTER SOCIAL ROOM

UNIVERSITY OF BRIDGEPORT

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

Welcome from the Provost



Kierstyn Hunter, Ph.D.

Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

This year's showcase of faculty and student scholarship is impressive! We have enjoyed an expanded calendar of events, which reveals just how much work goes into developing a scholarly community. Most importantly, this year's research reminds us of the value in connecting across disciplines. An effective symposium pulls your gaze away from the field with which you are most familiar and introduces you to different areas of inquiry and perspectives on solutions. The work on display shows us how interdisciplinary thinking positions us for creative teaching, innovative research, and stronger findings. Join me at this year's event as a learner: let your curiosity guide your participation and attention during the poster sessions and panel discussions. I look forward to learning with and from our UB community of scholars.

Special Thanks

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

Sponsors

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Welcome from the UB RISE Chairs





Elizabeth Fles, Ph.D.

UB RISE Co-Chair

Kevin Kelliher, Ph.D.

UB RISE Co-Chair

On behalf of the organizing committee, we are honored to welcome you to UB RISE 2026. This is our 15th year of showcasing the scholarly and innovative projects produced by University of Bridgeport. The work presented today has the potential to change the world.

For the first year, UB RISE has expanded into a multi-week event. We began UB RISE on April 6 and held events through April 10 — each college promoted the best of our faculty and students' research, innovation, scholarship, and entrepreneurial spirit. All these events culminate in our signature day of poster presentations, with the top competitors put on the hot seat to defend their research in a "Lighting Round" symposium.

This year, we are equally excited to welcome our Keynote speaker, Dr. Maria Asis. Practicing in Culinary Medicine, Dr. Asis is known for sharing her training in healthy cooking with students, families, and professionals throughout Connecticut communities.

Whether you are a student, faculty, staff, alum, or community member, today is a day to learn and to grow. Take the opportunity to interact with poster authors from other disciplines, build relationships, and share your experience. UB RISE is our day to break out of our academic silos, and we welcome you to do just that.

Keynote Speaker

Culinary Medicine: A Path to Health for Self, Family and Community

Culinary medicine is a discipline that integrates evidence-based nutrition with culinary arts. Nutrition serves as the cornerstone of health for individuals, their families, and future generations. Dr. Assis will review the pivotal research that has shaped this field while challenging prevalent nutrition myths on social media. As a new discipline, prospective areas for future research will be identified, encompassing basic science, social studies, and public health. Community outreach will be highlighted as a case study, demonstrating both the successes and challenges in establishing sustainable nutrition programs within our most underserved communities. The objective is to inspire the audience to consider the profound impact nutrition can have on their personal lives and to highlight the versatility of nutrition knowledge across various career paths.



Maria Assis, MD

Dr. Maria Asis earned her BS in Biology, magna cum laude, and MD from Tufts University and completed her residency in obstetrics and gynecology at New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center. She is a fellow of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology and a certified menopause specialist with the Menopause Society.

Passionate about the intersection of nutrition, lifestyle, and women's health, she completed certification in culinary medicine in 2025. She integrates this knowledge into her OBGYN practice. She extends this knowledge by teaching healthy cooking to medical trainees, lecturing in community and professional settings, and volunteering in schools and community events. She has completed a grant-funded cooking video series for New Haven students and families. She is currently heading a research project on the impact of a preconception nutrition and culinary program.

Recognized for her teaching, Dr. Asis has received the Lee Buxton Award (2017) and Stanley Lavietes Award (2022). Born in Córdoba, Argentina, and fluent in English and Spanish, she brings an international perspective to her practice and education.

Schedule

Registration
8:30 a.m.
John J. Cox Student Center Social Room
Check-in

Welcome and Opening Remarks
9:00 a.m.
John J. Cox Student Center Social Room

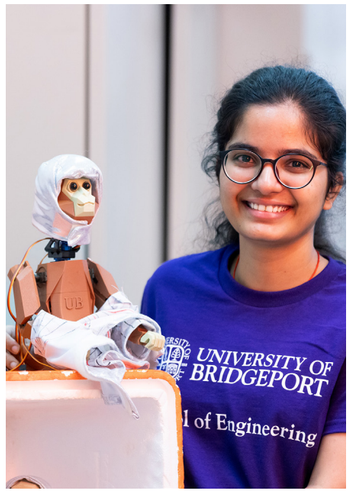
Kierstyn Hunter, Ph.D.
Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Kevin Kelliher, Ph.D. & Elizabeth Fles, Ph.D.
Chairs, UB RISE Committee

Poster Gallery Visit
9:15 – 10:15 a.m.
Social Room | College of Engineering, Business, and Education

Great Room | College of Science and Society and College of Health Sciences

Lightning Rounds
10:30 – 11:30 a.m.
Carlson Hall
High School Poster Finalists – Rm. 153
Undergraduate Poster Finalists - Rm. 152
Master's Poster Finalists – Rm. 252
Doctoral Poster Finalists – Rm. 253



Schedule continues to next page...