SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY EDWARDSVILLE

2026 SIUE PROJECT MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM
OPENING SESSION DETAILS

OPENING SESSION **8:10 A.M. – 9:10 A.M.**	
Meridian Ballroom	***Built for Crisis: Forging Leaders***

Presenter: ***CMSgt Brian "BK" Kruzelnick, USAF, Command Senior Enlisted Leader (TCCC-CSEL), U.S. Transportation Command, Scott Air Force Base***

Most organizations design systems and processes for optimal conditions, leaving them unprepared when things go wrong, uncertainty rises, and systems fail. Using firsthand insights from the historic 2021 emergency airlift of more than 122,000 people out of Afghanistan, and other practical examples, we'll strip away the complex framework and focus on the critical pillars of character, human connection, and trust needed for crisis leadership.

BIOGRAPHY

UNITED STATES TRANSPORTATION COMMAND
Office of Public Affairs, Scott Air Force Base, Illinois 62225-5357

Chief Master Sergeant Brian P. Kruzelnick



Chief Master Sergeant Brian P. Kruzelnick is the Command Senior Enlisted Leader for U.S. Transportation Command. He is the principal advisor to the combatant commander and senior staff on all matters concerning joint force integration, readiness, growth, and utilization of the workforce. He ensures commander's intent is understood and executed while guiding the development and implementation of command policy. Chief also ensures the strategic focus and synchronized efforts of more than 122,000 contractors, military and civilian warfighters providing global air, land, and sea transportation for the Department of War.

He is a native of Passaic, New Jersey, and entered the Air Force in 1994. During his career, he led in five major commands, covering training, mobility, ISR, electronic attack, command and control, strike, and space operations. Chief also guided the execution of command channel, SecWar-directed contingency and humanitarian relief, and joint and combined exercise missions for combatant commanders while assigned to total force, bilateral, multilateral, and joint environments. Additionally, he was an air advisor in Afghanistan to establish the structure for their air maintenance operations. Chief has served as an Air Force Command Chief Master Sergeant five times at the wing, numbered air force, and major command levels. He has had 13 assignments and deployed globally to support over 14 military named operations and numerous military operations other than war.

His major decorations include the Legion of Merit (3 OLCs), Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (4 OLCs), Air Force Commendation Medal (4 OLCs), and Air Force Achievement Medal (1 OLC). He is also the recipient of the Order of Saint Barbara.

Prior to assuming his current position, Chief Kruzelnick served as Command Chief Master Sergeant, Air Mobility Command, Scott Air Force Base, Illinois. As the commander's principal senior enlisted advisor, he counseled on the readiness and effective employment of 107,000 Total Force Airmen from 100 worldwide locations to support Rapid Global Mobility operations with a fleet of 1,100 aircraft.

He was an honor or distinguished graduate from all formal professional military education schools and completed numerous senior level courses to include the National Defense University's Keystone Fellow program. He also earned a Bachelor of Science in Aeronautics and Master of Science in Organizational Leadership, graduating with *summa cum laude* and *distinguished scholar* honors, respectively.

****PMI PDU Reporting*** – *This opening session is worth 1.5 PDUs.*

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY EDWARDSVILLE

2026 SIUE PROJECT MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM
MORNING BREAK-OUT SESSION DETAILS

MORNING BREAK-OUT SESSIONS **9:25 A.M. – 10:20 A.M. and 10:35 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.**	
Maple/Dogwood	***From Silos to Synergy: The Transition to Collaborative Work Management***
Presenter: Jeffrey Manning, Bayer Crop Science The transition from PMIS (Project Management Information Systems) to CWM (Collaborative Work Management) solutions represents a fundamental shift in project management practices. Organizations are moving towards more integrated, user-friendly, and collaborative approaches that enhance team communication and adaptability. This evolution is driven by the need for greater flexibility, real-time collaboration, and data-driven insights, reflecting the changing landscape of work in the modern era.	
Hickory/Hackberry	***We're Already Gambling: Let's At Least Get Good At It***
Presenter: Matt House, Gateway Delivery Partners Every roadmap commitment is a bet. When we describe planned work as commitments, we hide the odds, punish teams for being wrong, and end up measuring output because it's the only thing anyone actually promised. This session offers the alternative: run the portfolio like an investor. Stake time you're willing to lose, grade your evidence honestly, diversify across types of uncertainty, and define up front what would make you walk away.	
Oak/Redbud	***Vendor Management***
Presenter: John Laverdure, Senior Project Manager, The Manpower Group Every successful project relies on everyone working together for a successful outcome. Come spend some time with John Laverdure as he walks through some best practices in vendor management. Good vendor management is a strategic relationship….Come with John on the journey.	
Mississippi/Illinois	***AI as a Leadership Disruptor***
Presenter: Julie Williams, Principal Product Manager, Bayer A leadership-focused presentation that reframes AI not as a productivity tool upgrade but as a fundamental shift in work design and leadership accountability. The deck argues that as AI changes tasks and decision support, it cascades into new workflows, handoffs, and required capabilities — ultimately increasing, not diminishing, the value of human judgment and leadership accountability. It walks through three categories of work being reshaped (repetitive, analytical, and judgment-intensive), governance and decision-making considerations, an outcome-driven approach to role redesign, and practical next steps for leaders. The central thesis is that AI's true disruption lies in redefining where human judgment matters most, raising the bar for leadership in the process.	

****PMI PDU Reporting** – *Each break-out session is worth 1 PDU.*

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY EDWARDSVILLE

2026 SIUE PROJECT MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM
LUNCH SESSION DETAILS

LUNCH SESSION **12:00 P.M. – 12:30 P.M.**	
Meridian Ballroom	***Creating Confidence: What Great Project Leaders Do Differently***
Presenter: Mike Marchal, President, Holland Construction Services What makes a client, executive, or team confident that a project is truly in good hands? Drawing on three decades in the construction industry, Mike Marchal shares practical lessons about the leadership behaviors that create confidence: communicating honestly, managing expectations, confronting problems early, bringing solutions instead of just problems, and building trust before it's needed. The principles are simple, but they separate people who manage projects from those who truly lead them.	

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BIOGRAPHY

Mike Marchal, President, Holland Construction Services

Mike Marchal is President of Holland Construction Services, where he helps lead the company's strategy, growth, and long-term direction. Since joining Holland in 1997 after graduating from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville with a degree in Construction Management, Mike has advanced through progressively broader leadership roles, including Project Manager, Director of Operations, Vice President, and President.

Mike works closely with Holland's leadership team to develop future leaders, strengthen the company's culture, pursue new opportunities, and ensure the organization continues to deliver exceptional results for clients and communities across the region.

In addition to his role at Holland, Mike serves on several educational, civic, and nonprofit boards and is committed to mentoring students and emerging leaders.

**PMI PDU Reporting* – *This luncheon session is worth .5 PDUs.*

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY EDWARDSVILLE

2026 SIUE PROJECT MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM
AFTERNOON BREAK-OUT SESSION DETAILS

AFTERNOON BREAK-OUT SESSIONS
12:40 P.M. – 1:35 P.M. and 1:50 P.M. – 2:45 P.M.

Maple/Dogwood	***Dealing with Change Overload***

Presenter: Dr. Cort Hacker, Ameren

Organizations often focus on how to manage change, but rarely ask whether they are attempting too much change at once. In this interactive session, Dr. Cort Hacker explores the concept of change overload and its impact on teams, projects, and organizational performance. Using examples from aviation, aerospace, and the energy industry, participants will examine how excessive or poorly communicated change can increase risk, reduce effectiveness, and contribute to failure. The session will discuss practical approaches to prioritizing change, communicating the "why" behind change initiatives, implementing change freezes when appropriate, and developing sustainable change management processes that organizations can realistically support.

Hickory/Hackberry	***Beyond the Hype: What the Data Actually Says About GenAI in Project Management***

Presenter: Dr. Shivendu Singh, SIUE School of Business

Generative AI has become a major topic in project management, but how much of the discussion is supported by evidence? This session examines findings from recent empirical studies published in leading academic journals to provide a clearer picture of GenAI's role in project environments. We will discuss how project managers are using these tools, their impact on project performance metrics such as budget adherence and execution speed, and the practical challenges associated with integrating AI into established project management practices. Participants will gain evidence-based insights and practical takeaways for using GenAI to improve efficiency, manage risk, and support better project outcomes.

Oak/Redbud	***Building Highly Effective Teams***

Presenter: Jenni Hunt, SIUE School of Business

Why do some teams thrive while others struggle - even when they have talented people? Discover the hidden barriers to team success and how to unlock the unique strengths that drive high performance. In this session, participants will explore two powerful frameworks for understanding team effectiveness: Patrick Lencioni's Five Dysfunctions of a Team and The Working Genius Model™. Through practical examples and real-world insights, attendees will discover the common barriers that prevent teams from achieving their full potential, including the absence of trust, fear of conflict, lack of commitment, avoidance of accountability, and inattention to results. Participants will also gain an introduction to the six types of Working Genius and learn how understanding individual strengths can improve collaboration, engagement, and team performance. This session is designed as a high-level overview that will provide immediate applicable insights while offering a preview of the concepts, tools, and strategies explored in the full workshop. Whether you lead a team, serve on a team, or aspire to be a stronger collaborator, this presentation will help you identify opportunities to improve team dynamics and inspire you to continue the learning journey.

Mississippi/Illinois	***Human Led, Tech Enabled: Creating Actual Value at the Speed of AI***

Presenter: Tyler Norman, Scholastic, Inc

AI isn't the future of work; it's already reshaping how leaders create results. In this highly-interactive, practical, and no-hype session, you'll learn exactly how project and business leaders are using AI today to create real value. Instead of focusing on tools, this session shows where AI creates impact, and where human judgment still matters most. Lastly, you'll learn how to apply AI in your own work and leave the room with a crowd-sourced catalogue of use cases. Attendees will leave the session able to identify the specific parts of their work where AI can deliver immediate, practical value; distinguish between what should remain human-led and what can be effectively tech-enabled; and apply a simple framework to start using AI to save time, reduce risk, and improve decision-making.

****PMI PDU Reporting** –Each break-out session is worth 1 PDU.*

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY EDWARDSVILLE

2026 SIUE PROJECT MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM
CLOSING SESSION DETAILS

CLOSING SESSION **3:00 P.M. – 3:50 P.M.**	
Meridian Ballroom	***Mindset Always Wins the Day***

Presenter: ***Colonel (Retired) Scot Heathman, CEO, The Wedge Innovation Center***

Down 28–3, with the clock running and the odds under one percent. Scot Heathman knows that scoreboard — not from football, but from the year a brain tumor found him while he was commanding an Air Force base, and he had to relearn how to walk, talk, and see. Scot takes you from 30,000 feet on the end of a refueling boom to a hospital bed to an innovation center in Alton, and hands you three maneuvers you can run on Monday: Be Present. Be Bold. Be Innovative. Because mindset always wins the day.

BIOGRAPHY



Colonel (Retired) Scot Heathman, CEO, The Wedge Innnovation Center

At age three, Scot Heathman saw Star Wars on the big screen and decided he was going to be a pilot. Twenty-five plus years in the United States Air Force later, he had. Scot served and led as combat instructor pilot in the KC-135 and C-17, flying on six combat deployments, serving in the Pentagon on the Joint Chiefs of Staff as a strategic planner on Iraq matters, commander of Scott Air Force Base, and culminating as the vice commander of 18th Air Force, leading and supporting some 36,000 people. And then, in December 2018, life interrupted — in a big, big way. He'll tell you that part himself.

Today he is CEO of The Wedge Innovation Center in Alton, Illinois, and founder of Command With Courage, where he teaches CEOs, executives, and front-line managers to unleash the force within their teams. He holds a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from the Illinois Institute of Technology, three master's degrees, is a certified facilitator in Emotional Intelligence and DiSC, and is the co-author of *The Military Effect* and author of the forthcoming book *Command With Courage: Elevating Beyond Adversity*.

Additionally, Scot is a board member for the Soulcial Kitchen which battles food insecurity across the globe, serves at the request of the Governor on the Military Interstate Children's Compact Council and is a member of the Leadership Council of Southwestern Illinois' Military Affairs Committee.

He is living proof that courage is not the absence of fear — it is what you do next.

***PMI PDU Reporting** – This closing session is worth 1 PDU.*

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2026 SIUE PROJECT MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM

KEYNOTE SESSION PRESENTERS

NAME	TITLE	COMPANY
CMSgt Brian "BK" Kruzelnick	*USAF, Command Senior Enlisted Leader (TCCC-CSEL), U.S. Transportation Command*	*Scott Air Force Base*
Mike Marchal	*President*	*Holland Construction Services*
Colonel (Ret.) Scot Heathman	*CEO*	*The Wedge Innovation Center*

BREAK-OUT SESSION PRESENTERS

NAME	TITLE	COMPANY
Jeffrey Manning	*Portfolio Management Lead*	*Bayer Crop Science*
Matt House	*Independent Consultant*	Gateway Delivery Partners
John Laverdure	*Senior Project Manager*	*The Manpower Group*
Julie Williams	*Principal Product Manager*	*Bayer*
Dr. Cort Hacker	*Portfolio Manager*	*Ameren*
Dr. Shivendu Singh	*Assistant Professor, CMIS*	*SIUE School of Business*
Jenni Hunt	*Instructor, Management and Marketing*	*SIUE School of Business*
Tyler Norman	*Director, Strategic Supply Chain Programs*	*Scholastic, Inc.*