



The Jefferson Exchange

SOU AI Summit looks at the future of work and society

By [Mike Green](#), [Natalie Golay](#)

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Neil Sahota

What will be the role of humans in the near future when machines dominate the workplace? What will our social lives be like? The AI Summit at Southern Oregon University, March 21-22, explores the role of humans in a machine-dominated society ... and how to prepare students for the future of work and living in a society in partnership with machines.

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Joining the Exchange to discuss the summit are **Heather Stafford**, CEO of the [Rogue Workforce Partnership](#), **Dr. Randy Weber**, President of [Rogue Community College](#) and **Ian Ingram**, President and CEO of [Neuraven](#).



JPR Senior Producer, Natalie Gloay

L-r: Ian Ingram, CEO of Neuraven, JPR Host Mike Green, Heather Stafford, CEO of Rogue Workforce Partnership, and Dr. Randy Weber, President of Rogue Community College

SUMMIT SUMMARY

March 21-22, 2025: A panel of 18 regional thought leaders, entrepreneurs and educators will explore the multifaceted impact of artificial intelligence on society. The event is designed to inspire community discussions and provide actionable insights into the rapid integration of AI in Creativity, Education, Work, and Life.

The evening program on Friday, March 21 at SOU's Meese Auditorium will feature a "meet the presenters" wine reception followed by two panels on creativity and AI.

The full-day program on Saturday, March 22 at SOU's Rogue River Room features moderated panels on education, work, and life in this time of rapid AI expansion.

Following the panels, a community forum will engage audience questions, concerns, and reflections on AI. The Saturday program includes several exhibitor tables staffed by local groups and organizations.

Confirmed Presenters: Dr. Rick Bailey, SOU President • Micah Blacklight • Nisha Burton • Adam M. Curry • Dr. Daniel DeFreez • Dr. Kim Freeze • Sen. Jeff Golden • Paul Hynek, MPA • Ian Ingram • Rep. Don Morish • Aaron Meffett • Thor Muller • Dr. Cecily Shillam

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Opening Keynote: Heather Stafford. “The Future of Work is Human” As the CEO of Rogue Workforce Partnership, Heather Stafford brings a wealth of experience in workforce development and innovation. Her leadership has been instrumental in aligning educational programs with industry needs, fostering economic growth, and preparing the workforce for the challenges of an AI-driven economy. In her keynote address, Stafford will delve into strategies for empowering communities and businesses to adapt to the evolving technological landscape.

Closing Keynote: Dr. Randy Weber. “Reflections and Next Steps as a Region” Serving as the President of Rogue Community College since July 2022, Dr. Randy Weber has focused on enhancing educational pathways and strengthening community partnerships. With extensive experience in strategic planning and student affairs, Dr. Weber is dedicated to creating opportunities that lead to higher-paying jobs and a robust regional workforce. His closing remarks will address the critical role of education in equipping individuals with the skills necessary to thrive in an AI-augmented world.

MORE INFORMATION

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Mike Green

Mike Green is host of the Jefferson Exchange. Mike has lived in Southern Oregon for more than two decades. He is an award-winning journalist with over 20 years experience in media, specializing in media innovation, inclusive economics and entrepreneurship.

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Natalie Golay

Natalie Golay is the Senior Producer of the Jefferson Exchange. She has a B.A. in

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