



**Speakers:** Mara Woody, Anna-Bradley Schoenfeld (Riipen) and Susan Guerrero (Fletcher Technical Community College)

**Title:** Embedding Peer Learning and Collaboration to Support WBLE+ Integration

**Audience:** Faculty

**Topic:** Enhancing Work-Based Learning Through Peer Collaboration

**Summit track:** Milestones and engagement

**Objectives:**

- Train faculty to design and implement project-based learning experiences using the Riipen platform.
- Explore strategies for aligning course objectives with real-world projects, fostering student engagement and career readiness.
- Use Riipen’s tools to facilitate collaboration between students and industry partners, ensuring meaningful experiential learning outcomes.

**Session Description**

Embedding project-based learning into the curriculum is a powerful way to bridge the gap between education and workforce readiness. This interactive workshop will equip faculty with the tools and strategies needed to design and implement experiential learning opportunities using the Riipen platform. Participants will explore how to align course objectives with real-world projects, fostering student engagement and career preparedness through meaningful industry collaboration.

Grounded in the *Louisiana Prospers* and *Meauxmentum* frameworks, this session emphasizes creating structured milestones that engage all learners. By embedding experiential learning into courses, institutions can ensure that all students—regardless of background—develop the technical and soft skills required for today’s evolving job market. This model not only enhances learning outcomes but also removes barriers by integrating work-based experiences directly into the curriculum, eliminating the need for students to seek out additional opportunities on their own.

Faculty play a crucial role in guiding students through project-based learning, providing mentorship, and fostering collaboration with industry partners. By leveraging flexible course design and group-based projects, students build durable skills, expand their professional networks, and gain confidence in applying their knowledge to real-world challenges.

The workshop will include hands-on activities where participants will work in teams to develop curriculum-embedded project-based learning programs. Using real-world examples from Fletcher Technical Community College’s cybersecurity program, attendees will leave with actionable insights and a clear roadmap for implementing scalable, inclusive experiential learning in their own institutions.

**Speaker Bios**

**Dr. Mara Woody** is an innovator in higher education with nearly 20 years of experience. As Director of Strategic Partnerships at Riipen, she builds programs that integrate experiential learning into workforce development. Previously, she was Assistant Commissioner for Postsecondary Policy in Missouri, where she led initiatives to connect education and workforce development, founded the Missouri Adult Learner Network, and hosted the state’s first Student Journey Mapping workshop. Mara holds an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership and Policy from Vanderbilt University, with expertise in adult learners. She has served in academic affairs, process improvement, and digital transformation across higher education.

**Susan Guerrero:** With over twenty years’ experience in higher education, as Business Instructor, Business Department Head, and Dean of Business, Education, Arts, Math, & Science, Susan has grown



the division in program offerings and enrollment in existing programs by utilizing her strengths in communication, organization, creative and critical thinking, and human relations skills.

**Dr. Anna-Bradley Schoenfeld** is an Account Executive at Riipen and has 10 years of experience in the higher education sector as an instructor, student affairs practitioner, and development fundraiser. Dr. Schoenfeld's research emphasizes the inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in higher education in the United States. Dr. Schoenfeld joined Riipen to help expand its reach and impact, driving efforts to ensure all learners have equitable access to meaningful work-based learning experiences. She is dedicated to creating pathways that empower individuals to gain employable skills and unlock their full potential.

**Materials and/or Links:**

[Worksheet](#)