

NEWSLETTER



2025-2026 ISSUE 01

Celebrating 48 Years!!!

2026 TAIR Conference

Feb 24-27, 2026

Moody Gardens Resort

Galveston, Texas

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2025 Conference Attendance	230
Current Membership	316

TAIR News

TAIR Outstanding Professional Practice Award

The TAIR Outstanding Professional Practice Award recognizes those individuals who contribute to the field of institutional research in a meaningful way through their work. The basis for this year's award will be the best use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Institutional Research. If you or your office would like to be considered for this award, please access this link for more detailed criteria and the entry form: <https://www.texasair.org/index.php/conferences/2026-tair-conference/tair-2026-outstanding-professional-practice-award/>. The deadline for entries is close of business, Friday, January 2, 2026.

2027 TAIR Conference

*TAIR is headed to **Waco** for its 2027 Annual Conference. It will be held at the **Waco Convention Center** from Tuesday, March 30 to Friday, April 2. There will be an option between two hotels, **Hilton Waco** and **Courtyard Waco**. More information will be posted on the TAIR website as planning progresses. Be sure to save the date!*



TAIR 2025-2026 Executive Committee / Standing Committees

Executive Committee

President

Morgan Carter
Tarleton State University
Stephenville, Texas
president@texas-air.org

Vice-President

Dan Hubbard
University of North Texas
Denton, Texas
vice-president@texas-air.org

Secretary

Meghan Kajihara
North Central Texas College
Gainesville, Texas
secretary@texas-air.org

Treasurer

Clay Hall
Tyler Junior College
Tyler, Texas
treasurer@texas-air.org

Communications Officer

Emily Rhodes
UT Health Science Center at San Antonio
San Antonio, Texas
communications@texas-air.org

Professional Development Officer

Miriam Qumsieh
University of Houston – Clear Lake
Houston, Texas
professional-development@texas-air.org

Immediate Past President

Faron Kincheloe
Baylor University
Waco, Texas
past-president@texas-air.org

Individual Appointments

Electronic List Manager

Case Herndon Baylor University

Historian

Tracy Stegmair, Texas Woman's University

AIR Liaison

Morgan Carter, Tarleton State University

SAIR Liaison

G. Marc Turner, Texas State University

Program Committee

Program Chair

Dan Hubbard, University of North Texas

Local Liaison

Carmen Allen, Galveston College

Keynote Liaison

Erin Mulligan-Nguyen, TX A&M University–Corpus Christi

Concurrent Sessions

Jessica Pamplin, University of North Texas

Sponsor Liaison

Rick Leyva, Dallas College
Brianna Edwards, Dallas College

Conference Brochure Editor

Alison Malmstrom, Tyler Junior College

Session Facilitators

Kenna Cavnar, Nelson University
Erin Cowart, University of Texas at Austin

Discussion Tables

Lacie Beall, Coastal Bend College

Photographers

Sushil Pallemomi, Del Mar College
Liza Farrell, Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi

Pre-Conference Workshops

Miriam Qumsieh, University of Houston – Clear Lake

Nominating Committee

Faron Kincheloe, Baylor University (Chair)

David Brown, Tyler Junior College

Liza Farrell, Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi

Kawan Jaramillo, Lone Star College – Tomball

R. Joel Farrell, Texas Tech University Health Science Center

Financial Review Committee

Rick Leyva, Dallas College (Chair)

Kate Proff, Texas State University

Bonnie Hurford, Tarrant County College District

Awards Committee

Faron Kincheloe, Baylor University (Chair)

Vicky Dueer, University of Texas – Dallas

Mary Barton, University of North Texas

Daniel Le, Dallas College

Aaron Majek, Midland College

Kenna Cavnar, Nelson University

Erin Cowart, University of Texas at Austin

Morgan Carter, Tarleton State University

Connect with TAIR on LinkedIn:



President's Update

Hello TAIR Colleagues,

I hope this message finds you well in an already busy academic year! Please take a few moments to hear from your colleagues and the work they have been doing over the past several months.

First, I would like to recognize all the hard work of the Executive Committee. The officers will give their updates, but I do want to give a shout out to Emily Rhodes and Miriam Qumsieh. Emily hit the ground running and has already accomplished so much in her Communications Officer role. Miriam was able to get the summer workshops going again this past summer and was the first time since the pandemic in 2020. The organization is lucky to have a hard-working Executive Committee, and I am thankful for all their time and efforts.

The TAIR Strategic Plan is coming to an end in 2025, and with much thought and feedback from past Presidents, we will not be pursuing a formal strategic plan at this time. However, the organization's goals remain that of growing membership, continuing to offer high quality professional development, and being a statewide resource for the ever-changing demands of IR professionals. Thank you to those who were on the committee for the 2025 strategic plan and to those who have helped carry out the outcomes of that plan.

The TAIR 50th annual conference will be held in Austin at the DoubleTree. This is a milestone conference, and it was important to try and secure a location in Austin where TAIR held its first formal gathering. Per Tom Martin in our current TAIR strategic plan, "A group of visionaries coalesced around the notion of a Texas professional society focused on institutional research and higher education. A small cadre of "take-charge Texans" (Horace Griffitts, Rude Gaedke, William Lasher, and Joe Szutz) organized the first conference of Texas institutional research practitioners in Austin in 1979." We hope you will join us in Austin to celebrate the Golden Anniversary of this great organization.

It is hard to believe I'm halfway through the TAIR Presidency, and it has been an honor to serve this organization throughout the years. I have learned so much from my predecessors, especially our Immediate Past President, Faron Kincheloe. His wisdom and advice are much appreciated and has helped me navigate this position. Thank you all for allowing me to serve in this capacity, and I hope others are encouraged to run for a TAIR Executive Committee role and give back to the best state IR organization in the country!

Lastly, I hope everyone can attend TAIR 2026, as we will be gathering for the 48th time in Galveston. Our Vice President / Program Chair, Dan Hubbard, along with his Program Committee, are hard at work making sure we will have yet another memorable conference.

Morgan

Morgan Carter
TAIR President

Vice-President's Update

Hello TAIR Family,

Who's excited to go to Galveston?! I know I am! For many of us I'm sure Galveston conjures up great memories – the sea-wall and beaches, great seafood, taking a stroll through the shops at The Strand, riding the free ferry to the Bolivar Peninsula, and so much more. Galveston is a city so rich in history and culture, entertainment and sightseeing, outdoor recreation and great people, the perfect place to host our 48th annual conference.

*This year's conference theme is “**Anchored in Evidence: Navigating the Future of Higher Education**” submitted by Dr. Aishwary Pawar, Statistician at Southern Methodist University. Thank you to the creative individuals who submitted 24 themes voted on by the TAIR Executive and Program Committees. I believe this is an extremely appropriate conference theme as higher education institutions are more reliant than ever on the solid foundation that Institutional Research offices provide through research, data management, analysis, visualization, planning, reporting, stewardship, and education. We can't wait to see all the ways that “Anchored in Evidence” will continue to shape TAIR 2026.*

As a completely volunteer-based non-profit organization, TAIR wouldn't exist without the participation and involvement of our members – you! We encourage you to submit a proposal for a concurrent session or workshop (the call for proposals is open at texas-air.org). It's such a great way to share knowledge, gather feedback, network and collaborate with colleagues. As IR professionals, all of us have slightly different experiences and areas of expertise working at our home institutions. One of the greatest aspects of TAIR is the creative and supportive environment provided in which to share those experiences and learn from each other. Additionally, if you'd like to get more involved, we'd love to have your help on the Executive or Program Committees. If you've ever considered serving in the organization, I strongly encourage you to reach out to one of the Executive Committee members to indicate your interest. We'd love to have your help!

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the TAIR 2026 Program Committee. To plan and execute a conference like our annual event literally takes a village – from hotel and conference center planning to local arrangements to keynote speakers and sponsors – the conference wouldn't be possible without the help of many individuals working behind the scenes. Please thank them when you see them!

Thank you so much for your participation and involvement in TAIR. We look forward to seeing everyone at Moody Gardens in Galveston!

Sincerely,

Dan

*Dan Hubbard
Vice President/Program Chair*

Professional Development Update

Greetings TAIR Community and Colleagues!

We have begun accepting proposals for TAIR Virtual and Pre-Conference Workshops. Earlier this year we conducted a Professional Development survey, which provided us some insight on topics of high interest.

We will offer workshops throughout the year and for our pre-conference ranging from half-day to full-day courses. This will help to better accommodate deep dives in session topics and hopefully increase participation. We are also accepting shorter workshops for topics that can be covered in less time.

Professional Development workshops allow you and your staff to learn new skills, tricks, tips, and network with others. Please encourage your staff (and yourself!) to attend as these opportunities come available.

Do you have something you would like to share? For example:

- Do you have great skills or software knowledge that you would like to share?
- Do you know how to make pivot tables easy?
- Do you know how to use the Excel slicer to make quick and easy dashboards with student data?
- Any fun/cool tick/trait to share?

If so, please consider sharing your valuable knowledge with your colleagues. By sharing your experience with the TAIR community, we can all become stronger. Presenters serve an important role in the success of our conference and workshops throughout the year by providing quality content that is engaging and offers opportunities for learning and sharing valuable information and ideas. We sincerely appreciate those who volunteer to provide such opportunities, and we look forward to learning with you and from you.

- By attending or presenting a workshop, you can receive credit toward TAIR's Level I, II, and III Professional Development Certificates. More information about these certificates can be found here: <https://www.texas-air.org/index.php/professional-development/certificate-of-completion-program/>.
- To submit your pre-conference workshop proposal please complete our call for participation form <https://www.texas-air.org/index.php/conferences/2026-tair-conference/2026-call-for-participation/>.
- To submit a workshop proposal for our fall, spring, or summer offerings please send them to professionaldevelopment@texasair.org.
- If you have questions or need assistance, please don't hesitate to contact me at professionaldevelopment@texasair.org!

Certificate of Completion Program - The TAIR Professional Development Certificate of Completion Program serves as a recognition of the efforts by members to continue their education related to institutional research by learning new skills and knowledge. The program begins with the Workshop Completion Certificate which is awarded to attendees of workshops organized or sponsored by TAIR. The program recognizes successful completion of multiple workshops covering a broad range of topics related to institutional research. For purposes of this program, members who lead a workshop are granted credit for completing the workshop. Access to a list of workshops you have completed and your progress in the Professional Development Certificate of Completion Program is now available online.

Sincerely,

Miriam

*Miriam Qumsieh
Professional Development Officer*

Treasurer and Communications Officer's Updates

Hello TAIR members!

I hope everyone is doing well! It won't be long until we hear Galveston's sea winds blowing and see the sea waves crashing.

*Comparable to my Glen Campbell song reference, TAIR's finances are in good condition. As of the end of August 2025, we have **\$65,292.99** in cash holdings. Our Program Committee is hard at work to plan our next conference, so please register today!*

When you register, make sure the address you have on file for TAIR is up to date. All payments made via check need to be made payable to TAIR and sent to the following address:

TAIR
c/o Clay Hall – TAIR Treasurer, TJC
1327 South Baxter Avenue
Tyler, TX 75701

If you have any questions regarding TAIR payments or other financial issues, please contact me at treasurer@texas-air.org.

Clay

Clay Hall
Treasurer

Hello TAIR Friends,

As Communications Officer, most of my work happens quietly in the background, but I wanted to share a few updates on what we've been working on to keep TAIR running smoothly.

- **CVENT Enhancements** – We're working on making better use of CVENT (our conference registration system and event app). In the past, many of its features went untapped, but we're now exploring and implementing more of what it offers. Some changes are happening behind the scenes, while others you may notice during registration or in the event app at TAIR 2026.
- **File Management Migration** – We've officially moved away from Dropbox, which created storage and licensing challenges, and transitioned to Google Drive. This change gives us more space, reduces headaches, and saves money.
- **Communications & Website** – I continue to maintain the TAIR website and help manage the TAIR LinkedIn group. If you're not yet connected on LinkedIn, I encourage you to join: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/3873157/>
- **TAIR-L Access and Registration** – Please use your full institutional email address when registering for TAIR 2026 or renewing your TAIR membership. Using shorter aliases can cause TAIR-L posts to be held up for moderator approval.

I'm grateful to be able to support the work that keeps TAIR running smoothly, and I look forward to connecting with many of you in Galveston at TAIR 2026.

Emily

Emily Rhodes
Communications Officer

Immediate Past President's Update

Dear TAIR Friends,

One of the highlights of my year has been to meet with those of you who attended this year's conference in Corpus Christi. Kudos to 2025 Vice President, Morgan Carter and his Program Committee for the outstanding job they did organizing the conference.

The number of attendees and sessions at Corpus Christi was almost identical to those in Frisco. To achieve this level of participation outside of a metropolitan area is an indication to me of the strength and value of the TAIR organization. I want to thank everyone who contributed, whether in a big or small way, for your contribution to making this another wonderful conference.

For the first time in several years, we held Summer Workshops back in July including 3 in-person workshops. Thanks to everyone who participated, especially to our presenters for sharing their expertise. A big shout out to Miriam Qumsieh and Emily Rhodes for the many hours they put in to organize this event and to the new 2026 Executive Committee for their perseverance to see the event become a reality.

Finally, I would like to thank the 2025 Executive Committee for keeping things running smoothly throughout the year. It has been a pleasure to serve with outgoing officers, Treasurer John Gonzales and Communications Officer, Xiqian Liu and to continue serving with President Elect, Morgan Carter, Professional Development Officer, Miriam Qumsieh, and Secretary, Meghan Kajihara. Words cannot adequately express my thanks and appreciation for 2025 Immediate Past President, Tracy Stegmair. She has been and continues to be a great encourager, mentor, confidant, advisor, colleague and friend.

I look forward to seeing everyone again in Galveston in 2026!!!

Sincerely,

Faron

Faron Kincheloe

TAIR Immediate Past President

TAIR Awards

TAIR Best Presentation

We are honored to announce that this year's TAIR Best Presentation Award is hereby awarded to:

Sarah Burkhauser and Jenna Cullinanehege from Austin Community College

"Charting Our North Star: The Role of the Office of Institutional Research and Analytics in Developing Austin Community College's Theory of Change"

*It is our tradition that the winner(s) for the TAIR Best Presentation will have the opportunity to present at the annual AIR Forum. TAIR only exists because of the outstanding work by its members. Each year we have dozens of outstanding presentations which are posted on the TAIR website after each conference. Please join me in congratulating **Sarah and Jenna** for this well-deserved honor.*

TAIR Outstanding Service Award

At the 2025 Annual Conference, TAIR was honored to award the TAIR Outstanding Service Award to **David Brown**. **David** has provided many years of service to TAIR. He was our Professional Development Officer in 2014-15 and 2015 -16. In that role he was instrumental in starting the TAIR Professional Development Certificate of Completion Program. **David** served as Vice President/Program Chair for the 2020 conference in San Antonio. He was our President in 2020-21 and our Immediate Past President in 2021-22 during which time he had the unenviable task of switching to our only fully virtual conference and renegotiating several hotel contracts. **David** continues to mentor and support his staff members to serve on the TAIR Executive and Program committees. We are thrilled to present him with this award. Congratulations **David** and thanks for leading us through some of our most difficult times!!!

The TAIR Outstanding Service Award may be presented to TAIR members who have made significant contribution to TAIR over an extended period of time. If you would like to nominate an individual for the TAIR Outstanding Service Award, please submit your nomination to the TAIR Past President at past-president@texas-air.org. A nominee for the TAIR Outstanding Service Award must have been a TAIR member for at least five years and not a member, nor candidate for, the TAIR Executive Committee during the year nominated.

Per the TAIR Constitution and Bylaws, candidates for the TAIR Outstanding Service Award must meet at least 3 of the following conditions:

- been a member of the TAIR Executive Committee, served on Program Committees, been appointed by the President to serve on committees or in positions of responsibility consistent with those in Section 6 of the Bylaws;
- presented contributed sessions at TAIR conferences;
- organized, offered or acted as a primary presenter in workshops or panels at TAIR conferences;
- contributed in some other specific and significant ways that have advanced the purposes of TAIR.

TAIR Professional Practice Award

TAIR 2026 Outstanding Professional Practice Award

Purpose: This award recognizes excellence in the innovative application of AI to enhance institutional research practices. Submissions should demonstrate how AI has been used to solve problems, improve operational efficiency, improve student outcomes, or generate impactful insights, etc. in an innovative, secure, ethical, and effective manner.

The winner will be announced during the 2026 TAIR Annual Conference.

Eligibility: To be eligible, the AI application must be created or co-created by at least one current TAIR member at the time of submission. Collaborative projects involving non-members are permitted, but at least one of the creators must be a TAIR member.

Submission Requirements: Submissions must include the following...

- *Project Overview:*
 - ⇒ Name, title, and institution of person(s) submitting project for consideration.
 - ⇒ Purpose of the application (problem to be solved, process to be improved, desired output, etc.)
- *Technical Details:*
 - ⇒ Description of the application and the AI tools used.
 - ⇒ Include steps taken to ensure security, compliance, accuracy, and ethical practices were achieved.
- *Impact Assessment:*
 - ⇒ Description of the end results.
 - ⇒ Include metrics used to measure the success/impact of the application.
- *Optional Supporting Materials:*
 - ⇒ Screenshots, prompt snippets, documentation, etc.

How to Submit:

- Deadline = no later than January 2, 2026 (late submissions will not be accepted)
- Materials should be sent via e-mail to Faron Kincheloe, TAIR Immediate Past President and Chair of the Awards Committee, at past-president@texas-air.org

Judging Criteria: Submissions will be judged on the following criteria...

- Overall impact of the AI application
- Relevance to other institutions
- Originality/Creativity
- Detail (accuracy, documentation)

Travel Grants

Travel Grants

The TAIR Awards Committee is calling for applications for TAIR Travel Grants. If you need assistance to attend the TAIR 2026 Conference in Galveston, TX, please submit the following items to: past-president@texas-air.org

- *Applicants Name and Institution/Organization of Employment.*
- *Brief Resume/Curriculum Vita.*
- *Statement of how receiving the TAIR Travel Grant will contribute to the professional development of the individual.*
- *Statement describing the financial need and the financial support available from his/her institution and other possible resources.*

Criteria for awarding of TAIR Travel Grants

Recommendations by the TAIR Immediate Past President will be based on information submitted in the application materials. Applications from individuals who have not received a TAIR Travel Grant within the past three years will receive priority. Only one travel grant will be awarded to an institution in a single year. Those selected to receive the TAIR Travel Grant will be contacted by the TAIR Immediate Past President prior to the Conference to let them know they are a recipient of the TAIR Travel Grant.

TAIR Travel Grant recipients must register for the TAIR Annual Conference using the online registration process. The TAIR Grant recipient must pay all conference charges up front, and will turn in receipts to the TAIR Treasurer to be reimbursed up to the amount of the TAIR Travel Grant (\$350) for hotel, airfare and/or mileage calculated at the state rate. The TAIR Travel Grant can NOT be used to cover the cost of conference registration or membership fee.

For more information on the TAIR Travel Grant please contact Faron Kincheloe at past-president@texas-air.org.

Call for Nominations

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The TAIR Nominating Committee is calling for nominations for the following elected positions:

TAIR Vice President/President-Elect

- **2026-2027—Vice President/Program Chair for the 2027 Conference**
- **2027-2028—President**
- **2028-2029—Immediate Past-President**

TAIR Professional Development Officer: 2026—2028

TAIR Secretary: 2026—2028

TAIR Nominating Committee Members: 2026—2028 (2 seats)

Nominations can be made here: <https://www.texas-air.org/index.php/nomination-form/>

The President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Professional Development Officer serve on the TAIR Executive Committee. These elected positions are directly involved in decision-making for upcoming conferences and are responsible for the smooth operations of the association. There is work involved with each position, but these opportunities for service are very rewarding!!!

The Nominating Committee members serve two-year terms and help ensure that we have a full and qualified slate of candidates for the following year's election.

More information about the responsibilities of TAIR Officers is available in the TAIR Officer's Guide, posted on the TAIR Website at: <https://www.texas-air.org/index.php/officers/>

Feel free to nominate yourself if you are interested in serving for one of these positions.

There are many other opportunities throughout the year to get involved with TAIR, so please consider volunteering to serve on a committee or session coordinator.

All nominations will close on January 2, 2026!!!

Call for Participation

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

Proposal Submission Website: <https://www.texas-air.org/index.php/cfp/>

The deadline for submitting proposals is October 17, 2025 .

TAIR is an opportunity to share knowledge, growth, expertise, and tips and tricks with others in the field as well as practice your presentation skills. We invite you to contribute to the advancement of Institutional Research and Effectiveness by submitting one or more proposals for the 2026 TAIR Annual Conference February 24– February 27, 2026.

We strongly encourage members to co-present with service providers engaged by their institutions to demonstrate successful implementations of current, updated, and new partner solutions. For more information about these collaborations, contact our Sponsor Liaisons, Rick Leyva, rick.leyva@dallascollege.edu or Brianna Edwards, bedwards2@dallascollege.edu.

Session Tracks

Operations & Leadership – Focuses on the organization and management of Institutional Research offices and functions. Sample topics include tracking requests, organizing and archiving past studies, staffing, resources, and relationships with other operational areas.

Plan & Evaluate – Includes implementing assessment programs, goal setting and measuring, novel assessment ideas, accreditation topics, and program review.

Collect, Analyze, Interpret & Report – Emphasis is on tools, methods, and sources used for internal/external reporting, dashboards, and decision support systems.

Stewards of Data & Information – Deals with issues related to data accuracy, integrity, security, institutional data strategy, data warehousing, and decision support.

Educate Information Producers, Users, & Consumers – Demonstrates ways of training on the use of data and information to inform decision-making and includes a discussion of ways to collaborate with other stakeholder groups.

Current Issues & Research in Higher Education – Provides details on contemporary topics and research within higher education.

Session Formats

Speaker Session – A 45-minute session with one or more presenters, including a Question and Answer segment.

Discussion Session – A 45-minute, moderated session focusing on audience input and participation.

Panel Session – A 45-minute, moderated discussion with two to four panelists, each offering a unique viewpoint or perspective on a topic or issue.

Workshop – A three- or six-hour, hands-on session by one or more workshop leaders designed to provide attendees with a new skill or application of knowledge.

We are accepting proposals from Institutional Research professionals at all levels of their careers. If you are on the fence about presenting or unsure what format works best for your topic, please contact Jessica Pamplin (Jessica.pamplin@unt.edu) for more information.

2026 Conference Details

**Texas Association for Institutional Research
48th Annual Conference
February 24-27, 2026**

**Moody Gardens Resort
1 Hope Boulevard
Galveston, TX 77554**



Photos: Courtesy of Moody Gardens Resort

Anchored in Evidence: Navigating the Future of Higher Education

Conference Webpage: <https://www.texas-air.org/index.php/conferences/2026-tair-conference/>

Online Presence



Texas Association for Institutional Research

<http://www.texas-air.org>



Southern Association for Institutional Research

<http://www.sair.org>



Association for Institutional Research

<http://www.airweb.org>

TAIR Listserv



As a reminder, current TAIR members (2025) can post directly to the TAIR Listserv at tair-l@baylor.edu. Those with lapsed memberships from the two prior years (2023 and 2024) will continue to receive messages, but must renew their membership in order to post a new message or participate in listserv discussions.

To renew your membership, please visit: <https://www.texas-air.org/index.php/member-resources/>.