



**13<sup>th</sup> Annual Student Success Conference**

# **Own the Journey - Navigate with Confidence to Grow and Succeed**



**Ginsburg Center for Inclusion  
and Community Engagement**

[access.ucf.edu/student-success-conference](https://access.ucf.edu/student-success-conference) • SSC25

# table of contents

**01.**

A message  
from the Vice  
President

**03.**

OUR GOALS

**02.**

Program Schedule

**04.**

Breakout Sessions

# 05.

**Sessions  
Descriptions**

# 06.

**Keynote  
Speakers**

# 07.

**Resort Maps**



# A message from the Vice President

Dear Students,

Welcome to the 13th Annual Student Success Conference! This year's theme,

“Own the Journey – Navigate with Confidence to Grow and Succeed,” invites you to take charge of your academic and personal path with clarity, courage, and intention. At UCF, we believe that success is not just about reaching a destination, it's about understanding the process, learning from every step, and embracing growth along the way.

Throughout the conference, you'll connect with fellow Knights, engage with inspiring speakers, and participate in workshops designed to help you navigate challenges, sharpen your skills, and build the confidence to lead your own success story.

Our goals are to Promote, Foster, and Inspire meaningful connections and student success. We want every student to seize opportunities that:

Promote academic excellence by providing you with innovative learning strategies, essential resources, and a supportive network to help you succeed.

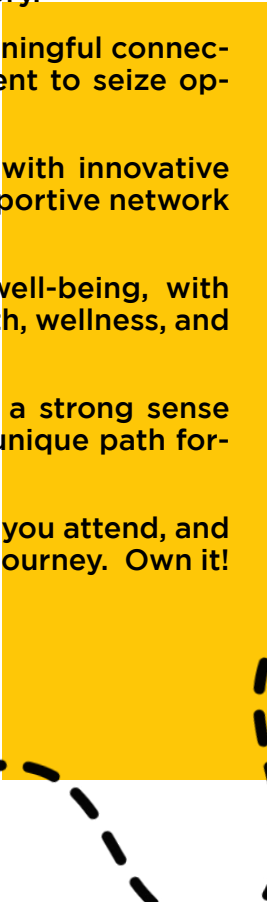
Foster personal growth through balance and well-being, with tools and practices that support your mental health, wellness, and stress management.

Inspire you to step boldly into your future, with a strong sense of purpose and the confidence to navigate your unique path forward.

Remember: every question you ask, every session you attend, and every connection you make is a step toward your journey. Own it! This conference is for you.

Warm Regards,

**Dr. Andrea I. Guzman**  
Vice President, Access and Community Engagement





# Program Schedule

## FRIDAY

|                   |              |
|-------------------|--------------|
| 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. | Check-in     |
| 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. | Registration |
| 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. | Event        |

## SATURDAY

|                    |                               |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| 8:00 - 9:45 a.m.   | Breakfast and Keynote         |
| 10:00 - 12:10 p.m. | Breakout Sessions I and II    |
| 12:20 - 1:50 p.m.  | Lunch and TikTalks            |
| 2:00 - 4:10 p.m.   | Break Out Sessions III and IV |
| 4:30 - 5:30 p.m.   | TikTalks +                    |

## SUNDAY

|                |                               |
|----------------|-------------------------------|
| 8 - 9:30 a.m.  | Welcome Breakfast and Keynote |
| 9:45 - noon    | Break Out Sessions V and VI   |
| 12 - 2:00 p.m. | Lunch and UCF "Family Feud"   |
| 2:00 - 3:50pm  | Load Busses and Departure     |

03.

## OUR GOALS

Empower students to articulate short- and long-term academic and career goals, identify key milestones, and create actionable steps to stay on track throughout their college journey.

Equip students with practical strategies to adapt to new environments and navigate challenges to build confidence in decision-making, problem-solving, and leadership abilities.

Support students in developing essential career competencies such as communication, professionalism, and networking, preparing them to successfully transition into internships, graduate school, and the workforce.

# Breakout Sessions

## SATURDAY

### Sessions I & II

Own Your Writing: Expert Tutors Share Tips for Success  
- Panzacola H3

Passport to Possibility: How Study Abroad Changed My Life  
- Sebastian I1

Build Your Own Adventure: Reverse Engineering Your UCF Path  
to Achieve Your Goals - Sebastian I2

Find Your Spark: Using Your Interests to Explore Majors &  
Careers - Sebastian I3

What's Next, and What's Yours: A Purposeful Path to Graduate  
School - Sebastian I4

### Sessions III & IV

Elevate your Impact: Recognizing Yourself as a Leader - Pan-  
zacola H3

Say Yes to the Right Things: Spotting Opportunities That Shape  
Your Story - Sebastian I1

Mindfulness in Motion: Managing Stress, Finding Balance  
- Sebastian I2

Stand for Something: Building Your Brand with Purpose  
- Sebastian I3

Leveraging your Community for Scholarships School  
- Sebastian I4

# SUNDAY

## Sessions V & VI

The Strengths Advantage - Sebastian J

AI & You: Navigating the Future of Learning - Sebastian I1

Grow With Guidance - Sebastian I2

Design Your Semester: Coaching for Confidence, Clarity, and Course Planning - Sebastian I3

Legacy Over Resume: Leading with Purpose in College and Beyond - Sebastian I4



# Sessions Descriptions

## **Own Your Writing: Expert Tutors Share Tips for Success**

**Presenter(s):** Hannah Benton, Shia Kirby, Khushi Patel, Cam Pufahl, and Imani Rodriguez

### **Sessions: Saturday, Sessions 1 and 2 - Panzacola H3**

Join experienced University Writing Center staff as they share tips, habits, and practical strategies for getting the most out of your writing in any class while also successfully navigating the UCF student experience

.....

## **Passport to Possibility: How Study Abroad Changed My Life**

**Presenter(s):** Matt Ryan, UCF Abroad

### **Sessions: Saturday, Sessions 1 and 2 - Sebastian I1**

Ready to dream big and go global? Join Matt Ryan, Associate Director of Study Abroad, and Beatrix Alerte, a Project B.E.S.T. alum, for an inspiring, interactive session that blends real stories, myth-busting quizzes, and practical tips to launch your own international adventure. Discover how study abroad can change your life—and start planning your journey today!



## **Build Your Own Adventure: Reverse Engineering Your UCF Path to Achieve Your Goals**

**Presenter(s):** Dr. Sarah Davenport (High-Impact Practices) and Carley Rich (Office of Undergraduate Research)

**Sessions: Saturday, Sessions 1 and 2 - Sebastian 12**

Not sure what's next after college or how to get there? This interactive workshop, will help you map out your journey toward your career or advanced degree goals. We'll explore how to gain undergraduate research, internships, and networking opportunities that help propel you toward your goals. You'll leave with a list of key milestones and a clearer plan to make your UCF experience work for your future.

.....

## **Find Your Spark: Using Your Interests to Explore Majors & Careers**

**Presenter(s):** Dani Hernandez and Josiah Leach, Career Services graduate assistants, along with Brian Creel, Associate Director of Career Services

**Sessions: Saturday, Sessions 1 and 2 - Sebastian 13**

Not sure what to study or where you're headed? Let our presenters guide you through the RIASEC interest areas and how they connect to real careers and UCF majors. Discover how your interests can lead to purpose, satisfaction, and success—with tools to help you take the next step!

**What's Next, and What's Yours: A Purposeful Path to Graduate School**

**Presenter(s):** , Salome Ramirez, peer mentor at Academic Advancement Programs

**Sessions: Saturday, Sessions 1 and 2 - Sebastian I4**

Thinking about grad school but not sure where to start? Join our speaker for a reflective, story-driven session that helps you connect your values, goals, and curiosity to graduate school possibilities. You'll leave with a personalized "Why Map," practical next steps, and a powerful reminder: You belong in spaces of knowledge, power, and purpose.

.....

**Elevate your Impact: Recognizing Yourself as a Leader**

**Presenter(s):** Luci Blanco, Jarib Benitez, Andy Ayup, Soraya Pearson, James Drinkwater, Dwayne Jones, Gabriella Parra, Panayiota Laliotis

**Sessions: Saturday, Sessions 3 and 4 - Panzacola H3**

Are you prepared to elevate your leadership skills? Join Student Government's Executive Branch to learn how you already possess the qualities needed to lead. In this engaging session, you will explore your personal leadership style, hear insightful stories from student leaders, and gain practical tools to enhance your impact both on campus and beyond. Whether you are just beginning or already active in leadership roles, this session will help you recognize and develop your leadership potential.



## **Say Yes to the Right Things: Spotting Opportunities That Shape Your Story**

**Presenter(s):** Austin Wilson, Manager of Public Affairs

**Sessions: Saturday, Sessions 1 and 2 - Sebastian 14**

Your time at UCF is full of choices—so how do you know which ones will shape your future? Join the session for an inspiring, interactive session on saying “yes” with purpose. Try out real-world scenarios, explore leadership pathways, and leave with your own “opportunity filter” to help you choose what matters most.

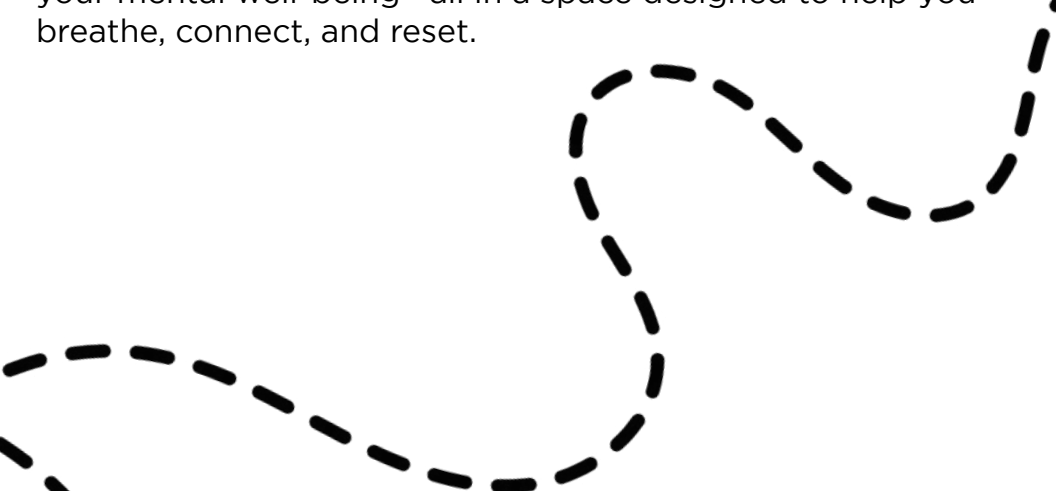
---

## **Mindfulness in Motion: Managing Stress, Finding Balance**

**Presenter(s):** Ashley Allette, M.S., Mental Health Professional at UCF CAPS

**Sessions: Saturday, Sessions 3 and 4 - Sebastian 12**

Feeling overwhelmed? Join this session for a calming, interactive session that blends storytelling, reflection, and guided mindfulness practices. Learn simple tools to manage stress, find balance, and build a daily routine that supports your mental well-being—all in a space designed to help you breathe, connect, and reset.

A decorative graphic consisting of a thick, black dashed line that forms a large, flowing, abstract shape, resembling a stylized 'S' or a wave, positioned in the bottom right corner of the page.

# Stand for Something: Building Your Brand with Purpose

**Presenter(s):** Ms. D'Bria A. Bradshaw, Esq., MBA

**Sessions:** Saturday, Sessions 3 and 4 - Sebastian 13

What do you want to be known for? Join this session for a powerful, purpose-driven session where you'll define your personal brand, explore leadership opportunities, and learn how to show up with confidence and clarity. Leave with a plan—and a bold affirmation: “My voice is my power. My brand is my story.”

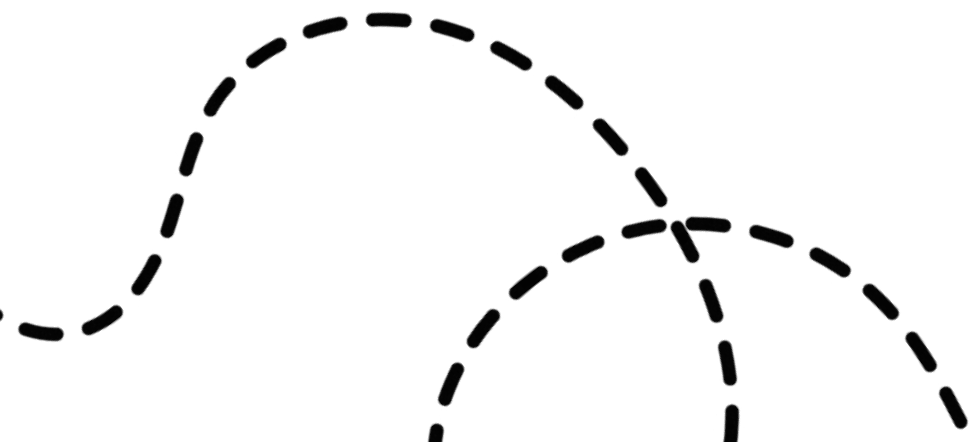
.....

# Leveraging your Community for Scholarships

**Presenter(s):** Ms. Ketty Dones

**Sessions:** Saturday, Sessions 3 and 4 - Sebastian 14

Join Ms. Ketty Dones to explore strategies for uncovering opportunities beyond traditional corporate, federal, and university funding sources. This presentation will highlight the advantages of pursuing scholarships offered by local nonprofit organizations. Students will discover how engaging with their local community can positively impact their financial situation as well as their professional development. Additionally, there will be links to local nonprofit scholarship opportunities that students can benefit from.



# The Strengths Advantage

**Presenter(s):** Gary Cahan

**Sessions:** Sunday, Sessions 5 and 6 - Penzacola H3

Discover how your unique strengths can shape a purposeful college experience and career. In this exclusive 2-hour workshop, Gary Cahan guides participants through the Gallup Strengths framework to uncover their natural talents, build confidence, and lead with impact. This session is designed to help you move beyond the resume and toward a legacy of leadership, belonging, and purpose.

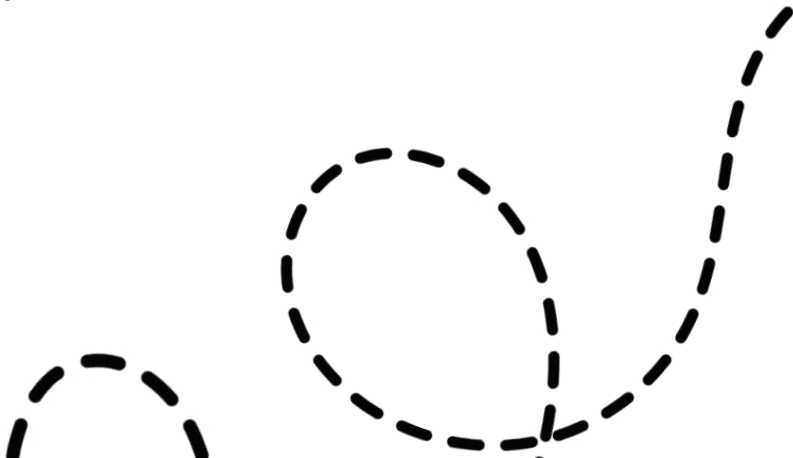
.....

# AI & You: Navigating the Future of Learning

**Presenter(s):** Dr. Kevin Yee, UCF’s AI Coordinator and Faculty Center expert

**Sessions:** Sunday, Sessions 5 and 6 - Sebastian 11

Curious about how AI tools are changing college life? Join Dr. Kevin Yee, UCF’s AI Coordinator and Faculty Center expert, for a dynamic session that explores how students can use generative AI ethically and effectively. Discover how emerging tech can support—not shortcut—your academic and career goals and leave with practical tips to become AI-fluent in a rapidly evolving world.



## **Grow With Guidance**

**Presenter(s):** SOAR Peer Mentors

**Sessions: Sunday, Sessions 5 and 6 - Sebastian 12**

Ready to grow with guidance? Join our amazing SOAR peer mentors for an interactive session on how to find—and become—the right mentor. Learn how to clarify your goals, build meaningful connections, and use the Mentor Toolkit to support your journey with confidence and purpose.

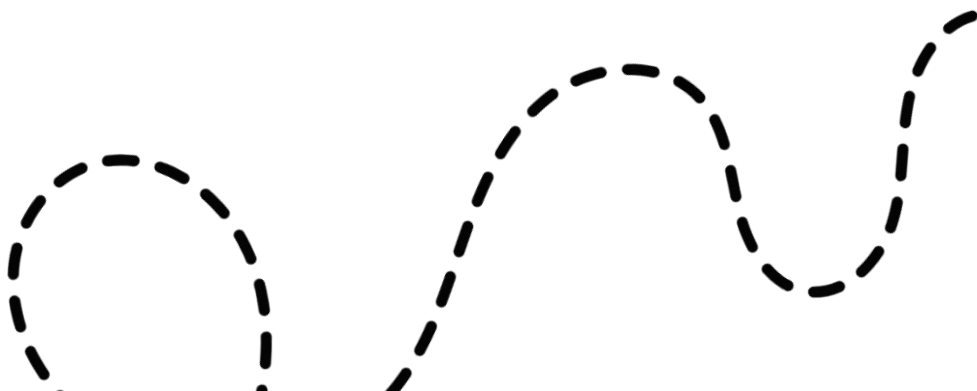
---

## **Design Your Semester: Coaching for Confidence, Clarity, and Course Planning**

**Presenter(s):** Stephanie Thompson, Chandini Balwant, Nina Leonard, and Diana Taylor

**Sessions: Sunday, Sessions 5 and 6 - Sebastian 13**

Ready to take control of your college experience? Join Academic Success Coaching for a hands-on session that helps you reflect, plan, and prepare for a successful semester. Through storytelling, peer sharing, and personalized tools, you'll leave with a clear academic goal, a strategy to tackle challenges, and the confidence to move forward with purpose.



## Legacy Over Resume: Leading with Purpose in College and Beyond

**Presenter(s):** Esteban Baez Sola and Nyauni Crowelle-Feggins

**Sessions: Sunday, Sessions 5 and 6 - Sebastian 14**

What do you want to be remembered for? Join the session—for a powerful, story-driven session that helps you define your values, map your impact, and explore leadership opportunities at UCF. Through reflection, discussion, and affirmation, you'll leave ready to lead with purpose—and build a legacy that lasts.



# Keynote Speakers

## L. Trenton S. Marsh, Ph.D

L. Trenton S. Marsh, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor in the Learning Sciences and Educational Research department at the University of Central Florida. His interdisciplinary work focuses on understanding the experiences of historically marginalized students and confronting disproportionality in education. He works alongside youth and their communities to reimagine and inform both practices and policies.

Dr. Marsh received the “Spirit of Innovation” award at the UCF/Valencia Downtown campus and most recently was named New York University’s 2025 Spirit of Steinhardt Ascending Champion, the second highest award given out at Steinhardt. Dr. Marsh is also the recipient of the 2025 Volunteer of the Year for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Florida for creating the Healing Oasis for Peace and Empowerment® (H.O.P.E.) Circle. In partnership with the Levy-Hughes Club in the historic Parramore community, H.O.P.E. amplifies the concerns of young people and fosters a space to work alongside young people to discover transformative solutions.



Dr. Marsh’s research has been funded by the National Science Foundation-Civic Innovation Challenge, the American Physical Society, the American Psychologi-

cal Association (Division 15- Educational Psychology), UCF Downtown, and the Orlando Magic Youth Foundation. He has published his interdisciplinary research widely, some include Teachers College Record, Urban Review, Education Week, Progress in Disaster Science, American Association of Physics Teachers, and Urban Education. Before his academic career, Dr. Marsh was a Managing Business Consultant at IBM Corporation for nearly a decade. He is inspired daily by his wife of 12 years and his three sons; and thankful to his Lord and Savior Jesus for the gift of life



# Dr. Adrienne Frame

Dr. Adrienne Frame serves as the Vice President for Student Success and Well-Being at the University of Central Florida. In this role, Dr. Frame has oversight and supervision for Student Life, Community Support, Student Rights and Responsibilities, Wellness, Housing and Residence Life, and First Year Transition.

As a dedicated, passionate, and inclusive student-centered educator, Dr. Frame has a distinguished record of more than 29 years of service to the field of Student Affairs. She has been active in regional and national organizations, including service as the President of the Southeastern Association of Housing Officers (SEAHO) and as a faculty member for the Jim Grimm National Housing Training Institute (NHTI) and for SEAHO's Regional Entry Level Institute (RELI). She has authored a book chapter on lessons learned from crisis response, has presented at conferences at the regional and national level, and has delivered several invited keynote addresses.

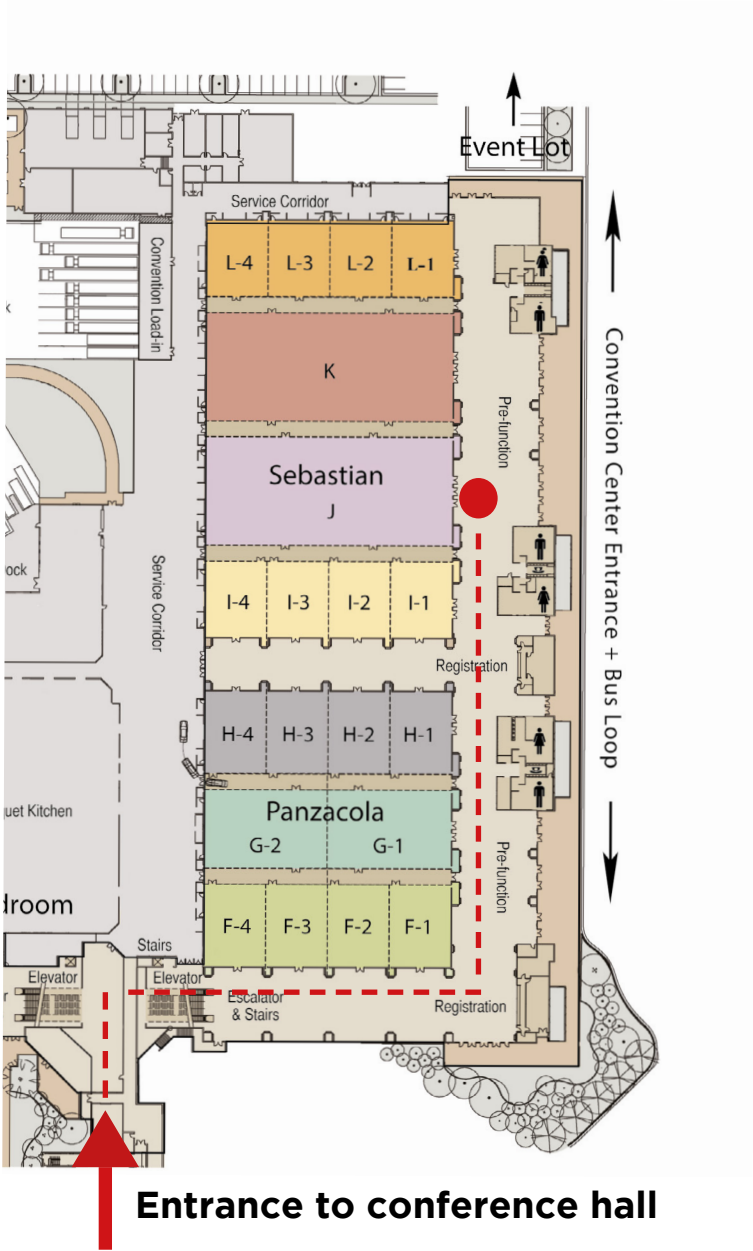
Dr. Frame is energized by opportunities to work with students toward the achievement of their goals and in building coalitions of faculty, staff, and student leaders at all levels of the academy to imagine and realize collective objectives and favorable outcomes.



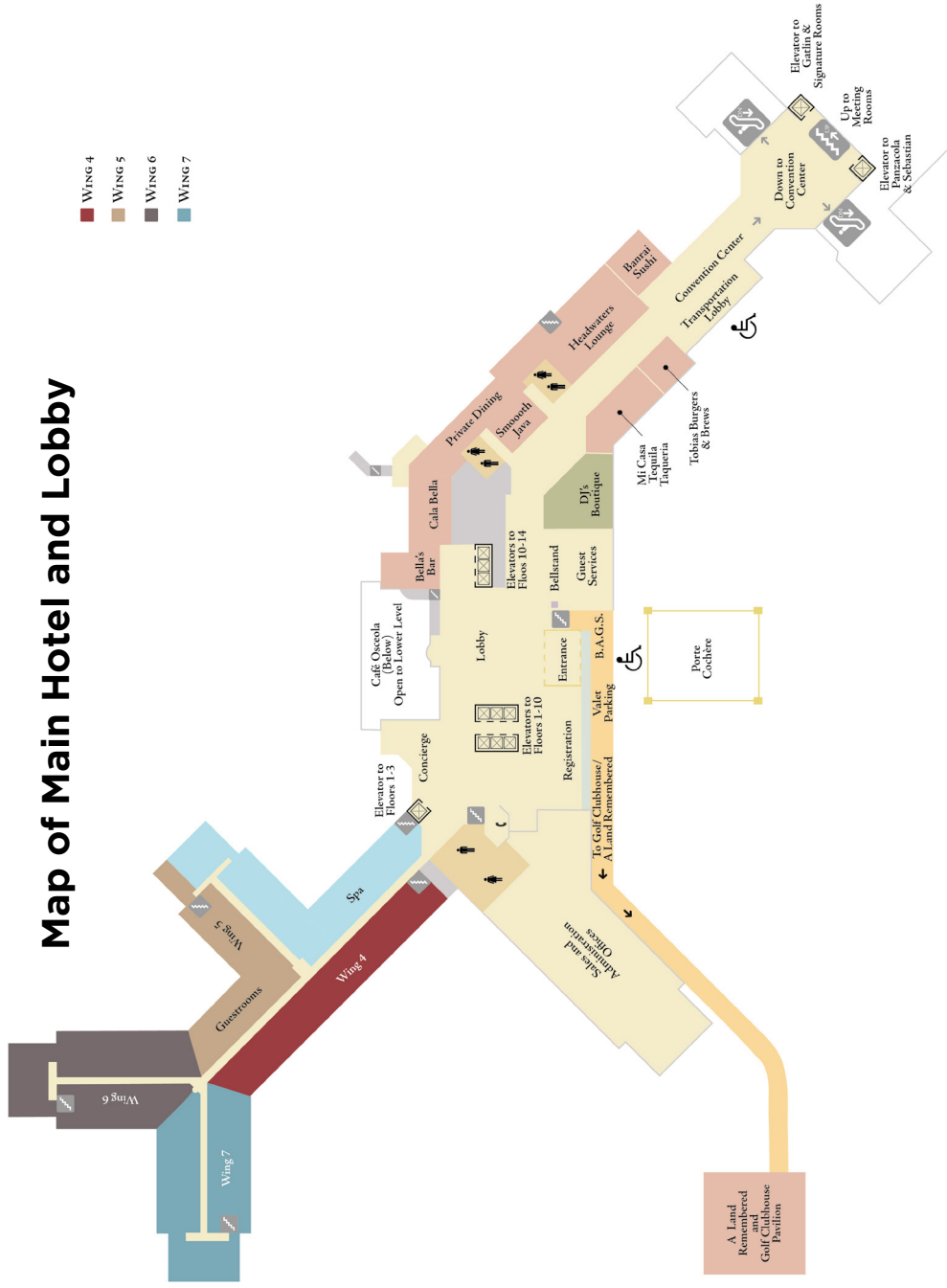


# Resort Maps

Map of Conference Hall



# Map of Main Hotel and Lobby





**Thank you for attending the 13th annual Student Success Conference**

**Special thanks to:**

the Rosen Shingle Creek Resort;

our Presenters and Keynote Speakers;

UCF staff, peer mentors, student and graduate assistants;

our volunteers, and the Ginsburg Family Foundation, Inc.