

RISE TOGETHER:

RESKILLING FOR THE AI ERA BREAKFAST



Dean Karthik
Kannan

Karthik Kannan is Halle Chair of Leadership and the dean of Eller College of Management, University of Arizona. He joined in 2022. Previously, he spent 19 years at Purdue's Krannert School of Management in various capacities, including as the Associate Dean for Research and Partnerships, founding academic co-director for MS (Business Analytics and Information Management).

Professor Kannan is a thought leader in digital transformations, analysis of digital traces, and strategic foresighting. He has published many papers in leading management journals and has won various awards. For 2017-18, he was awarded the prestigious Jefferson Science Fellowship by the National Academies of Sciences and Engineering.

His undergraduate degree is in Electrical and Electronics Engineering from NIT Trichy (formerly REC Trichy). Before joining Purdue, he obtained his Ph.D. in information systems, MS in Electrical and Computer Engineering, and MPhil in Public Policy and Management, all from Carnegie Mellon University. Before joining the graduate school, he worked with Infosys Technologies.

His research interests in about 300 words: He studies problems at the intersection of technology and business. His doctoral work focused on the role of information in determining sequential auction outcomes. Eventually, that work spawned interests in three methodologically different directions: a) computational, b) empirical, and c) behavioral economics work, with theory continuing to be the strong foundation for much of the research. Theoretically, he has studied the problem of pricing in data networks. He has specifically analyzed problems in peer-to-peer content delivery networks, cardinality bundles (e.g., as they are used in data networks), and the welfare implications in security markets. The theoretical understanding of related mechanisms was crucial for him to develop the innovation in congestion pricing, which was jointly patented with AT&T. For problems intractable with theory, he has used computational methods. Specifically, he used Q-learning-based agents to study the role of information problems that are not tractable to theoretical analysis and to analyze frictions in GSP auctions. One of those papers was written in 2003, when Machine Learning tools were unfamiliar to most business school research. In 2010, he co-authored a paper that used text-mining software to demonstrate that textual features in SEC filings by firms in the stock market were correlated with security breaches. Most empirical work initially focused on econometric models, such as those examining the effect of incentives on retail review-writing platforms. Recently, he has become interested in investigating empirical problems with theoretical underpinnings. One problem is creating a decision-making tool when the data's causal structure is only vaguely known. His team implemented this solution for a Fortune 100 company. He has also established a new kind of strategic best-response fair machine learning algorithm. He has studied behavioral economics problems related to information revelation in auctions, piracy, etc.

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Dr. Mohammed
Shafae

Mohammed Shafae is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Systems and Industrial Engineering at the University of Arizona and a member of the Graduate Faculty. He earned his Ph.D. and M.S. in Industrial and Systems Engineering from Virginia Tech, and his B.S. and M.S. in Production Engineering from Alexandria University in Egypt. His research focuses on smart manufacturing systems, cyber-physical systems security, statistical process monitoring, and data-driven quality control. He is particularly interested in leveraging manufacturing data for modeling, monitoring, and securing machining processes.



Dr. M. Gray
Hunter

Dr. M. Gray Hunter serves as Senior Lecturer of Business Analytics and Academic Director for the Master of Science in Business Analytics program at the University of Arizona's Eller College of Management. After earning his Doctorate in Economics from the University of Kentucky in 2017, he joined Eller's Economics department before transitioning to the newly established HSLOpez School of Business Analytics.

A three-time recipient of the large-lecture Instructor of the Year award, Dr. Hunter specializes in making complex analytical concepts accessible to students through his courses in Statistics, Business Analytics, Data Visualization, and Economics. His expertise spans from foundational economic theory to applied business analytics, culminating in the publication of his undergraduate textbook on Business Analytics. His research focuses on Public and Labor Economics, with particular emphasis on educational expectations and workforce preparedness.

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Mr. Stephen
Beaver

Steve leads Benchmark's global legal, compliance, ethics, and intellectual property matters. He also serves as Benchmark's corporate secretary. Steve has more than 20 years of experience managing litigation, contracts, labor and employment matters, trade secrets, intellectual property, corporate controls, governance, and business processes. He also serves on the Board of Directors of the Arizona Chamber of Commerce.

Before joining Benchmark, Steve was Senior Vice President and General Counsel at Aspect Software in Phoenix, Arizona. Previously, he served as General Counsel at TPI Composites, Inc., a global provider of structural composite products, and as Vice President and General Counsel at Swift Transportation Company. Earlier in his career, he practiced commercial litigation and labor and employment law at Bryan Cave, now Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP.

Steve earned a Juris Doctor from Marquette University Law School and a Bachelor of Arts in Communications from the University of Arizona.



Dr. Richard
Huntsinger

Dr. Richard Huntsinger is a Fortune 500 research and development executive, Silicon Valley entrepreneur, expert witness, professor, author, and management consultant with broad international experience leading programs in AI, data analytics, process automation, customer service operations, IT operations, and enterprise software development. He now serves as Senior Lecturer in the HSLopez School of Business Analytics at the University of Arizona, where he lectures and oversees research on data strategy and data science applied to law, business, and public policy. Previously, he served as Faculty Director and Distinguished Teaching Fellow at the University of California-Berkeley, where he led the Data & AI Strategy program, providing advisory services and training to more than 2,300 executives across 73 countries. He is a strategy and technology advisor to several companies and a frequent guest speaker in industry, academia, and government.

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**Dr. Joe
Valacich**

Joe Valacich studies how people actually behave when they use technology—and turns that into products companies can use. He has nearly 300 scholarly publications, including 37 in Financial Times Top 50 journals, more than 38,000 Google Scholar citations, and an h-index of 83. His patents cover using fine-grained digital behavior to infer user intent, confidence, bias, and emotion. In 2014 he co-founded Neuro-ID, which analyzes real-time online behavior to detect fraud, increase conversion, and improve customer experience. The company raised nearly \$50 million and was acquired by Experian in 2024. He is an award-winning educator and co-author of widely used computing textbooks that have trained generations of technology professionals. He has helped set national standards for computing education and launched online degree programs at multiple universities.

His honors include the AIS Leo Award for lifetime achievement, the AIS Impact Award for research with impact beyond academia, election as an AIS Fellow, recognition as a Senior Member of the National Academy of Inventors, and multiple University of Arizona awards for innovation and entrepreneurship.