

# Fall Analytics Day at KSU

Friday, November 10, 2023 | 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. | KSU Center



## Poster Winners

### Undergraduate Students

1<sup>st</sup> Place – Elaine Pollard – [Does Hands-Free = Accident Free?](#)

2<sup>nd</sup> Place – Desyne Martinez – [Multiple Myeloma, Where are you Hiding?](#)

3<sup>rd</sup> Place – Megan McCabe – [Burning the Candle for Both Degrees: A Comparison of Factors Influencing Medical Student Burnout among Undergraduate and Professional Students](#)



## Master's Students

1<sup>st</sup> Place – Elizabeth Wile – [Mapping Changes in Car Accidents after Covid-19](#)

2<sup>nd</sup> Place – Greg Balkcom – [Analysis of the Foot and Ankle Activity Level Scale \(FAALS\) Instrument Using the Rasch Measurement Model](#)

3<sup>rd</sup> Place – James Down – [XGBoost Unleashed: A Data-Driven Approach to Predicting Employee Churn](#)

**Ph.D. Student Winners** – Royce Alfred and Caleb Greski – [Are You Feeling Lucky? An Analysis of the Collectible Card Game Market](#)



## Agenda

7:30 – 8:30am	Student Poster Competition (sponsors only)
8:30 – 10:25am	Student Poster Presentations and Breakfast
10:30 – 10:35am	Welcome – <i>Dr. Sherrill Hayes, Director, School of Data Science and Analytics</i>

10:10 – 11:10am	Journey to Modern Day Data Science: The Past, the Present, and the Potential Future – <i>Dr. Bob Vanderheyden, Principal Data Scientist – Manager, Microsoft</i>
11:15 – 11:25am	Analytics at WellStar – <i>Nathan Ghadirifard, Director, Strategic Market Analytics, WellStar Health Systems</i>
11:30 – 11:40am	An Efficacy Rating for March Madness Tournament Seeding – <i>Nathalie Jones, MS Data Science and Analytics Candidate, KSU</i>
11:45am – 12:15pm	Travel through IHG’s Cloud Data Transformation – <i>Barbara Liesenfelt, Head of Data Engineering, IHG Hotels &amp; Resorts</i>
12:20 – 12:25pm	Announcement of Undergraduate Student Poster Presentation Winners – <i>Jimmy Hendricks, Senior Director, Data Science, Best Buy</i>
12:25 – 12:30pm	Announcement of Graduate Student Poster Presentation Winners – <i>Omar Kitosi, Manager, Data Analytics and Reporting, Southern Company</i>

## **Keynote Speakers**



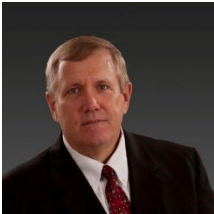
**Nathan Ghadirifard**  
**Director, Strategic Market Analytics**  
**WellStar Health Systems**

Nathan Farzad Ghadirifard is a seasoned professional and a visionary leader in the field of healthcare analytics. With a strong academic background in data science and business administration, Ghadirifard currently serves as the director of strategic market analytics at Wellstar Health System. Ghadirifard’s exceptional ability to analyze complex datasets and identify meaningful patterns enables WellStar to optimize its operations, enhance patient care, and navigate the dynamic healthcare landscape effectively.



**Barbara Liesenfelt**  
**Head of Data Engineering**  
**IHG Hotels & Resorts**

Barbara Liesenfelt serves as Head of Data Engineering for Technology Services at IHG Hotels & Resorts. She is based at IHG’s American headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia and is responsible for providing data platforms and delivery to the enterprise. Since joining IHG in the United Kingdom in 2002 at their global headquarters, Barbara has grown through roles in technology, progressing from a hands-on developer to managing global data delivery. With a team including data architecture as well as development, she led IHG’s cloud analytic transformation. Barbara earned her Master of Business Administration from Xavier University and a bachelor’s degree in Economics from Indiana University. She is married to Paul Martin, a fellow techie, and they are the proud parents of Nate, 12, and Ella, 10.



**Dr. Bob Vanderheyden**  
***Principal Data Scientist – Manager***  
**Microsoft**

Bob Vanderheyden has over 30 years of experience as a data scientist. In that time, he's worked in Institutional Research for a large community college system and in Marketing roles for multiple Fortune 1,000 corporations, including Transportation, Education, Telecommunications, Financial Services, Insurance and Information Technology industries. He currently leads a team of data scientists supporting email security for Microsoft Initiatives. In 2015, 25 years after he completed his Masters Degree, Bob enrolled in the first cohort of the Kennesaw State Ph.D. program in Analytics and Data Science, completing his Ph.D. in the Fall of 2019. Bob has attempted to stay active with the KSU program and event taught Masters-level data science courses for two years after his graduation.



**Nathalie Jones**  
***MS Data Science and Analytics Candidate***  
**Kennesaw State University**

Nathalie Jones is a researcher and mathematician from Elijay, Georgia. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in Computational and Applied Mathematics with a Minor in Applied Statistics and Analytics from Kennesaw State University in 2021, and she will complete her Master of Science in Data Science & Analytics in December 2023. Nathalie has proficiency in statistical coding across many different languages, including SAS, Python, R, and SQL. She has experience applying her mathematical and statistical coding skills to academic research, as well as in the corporate business analytics environment.

Currently, Nathalie lives in Kennesaw, Georgia with her partner of over a decade, Alexis Lowery, and their 14-year-old cat, Alyx. They enjoy spending time together cooking homemade meals, sipping coffee, working on research projects, and watching movies. A fun fact about Nathalie is that, as a native Georgian, the only ocean she has ever seen is the Pacific Ocean off the coast of California.

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