



2026 FUTURES CONFERENCE

*Leading in the Intelligent Era:
Human Judgment, Shared Leadership, and the Future of Legal Service*

New York City • February 23–25, 2026

The 2026 Futures Conference invites leaders across the legal ecosystem to New York City for an inspiring, forward-looking experience that blends community, innovation, and human-centered leadership, highlighted by the return of the College’s Black Tie Gala to honor the Class of 2026 Fellows and the Michael Mills InnovAction Award winner. Over two days of keynotes, hands-on labs, intergenerational exchange, and thoughtful peer collaboration, attendees will explore the forces reshaping legal service, including the rise of intelligent systems, shifting client expectations, evolving professional identities, and new opportunities to expand access to justice, while emphasizing the enduring importance of human judgment, creativity, and leadership in guiding change. Participants will learn, experiment, reflect, and practice together, gaining new approaches to communication, innovation, and leadership, deepening their understanding of the transforming legal ecosystem, and experiencing the power of the Fellows community. They will leave inspired, connected, and equipped with shared language and renewed purpose to carry momentum back to their organizations, clients, and communities.

SCHEDULE (subject to change)

PRE-CONFERENCE CELEBRATIONS! Monday, February 23		
6:30 pm- 10:00 pm	<p>Black-tie Honors Gala</p> <p>Sponsors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael Mills InnovAction Award sponsored by Calibrate Strategies • Entertainment provided by Society 54 <p>An elegant evening overlooking Central Park celebrating innovation, leadership, and the Fellows who shape the profession’s future.</p> <p>Celebrating the 2026 Michael Mills InnovAction Award Winner and the Class of 2026 New Fellows.</p>	<p><u>The Robert</u> 2 Columbus Circle New York, NY 10019 212.299.7730</p>

FUTURES CONFERENCE—DAY ONE

Tuesday, February 24

Time	<i>Understanding the Intelligent Era & Designing the Future</i>	
8:00 am-8:30 am	Registration & Continental Breakfast	
8:30 am-8:45 am	Welcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kristen Bateman Leis, 2026 Futures Conference Chair
8:45 am-9:15 am	Opening Remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chris Boyd, COLPM President • Patrick Fuller, COLPM President-Elect
9:15 am-10:30 am	<p>KEYNOTE ADDRESS FEATURING RICHARD SUSSKIND, CBE, KC (HON.)</p> <p>Rethinking Legal Expertise in the Age of AI How judgment, value, and professional identity evolve when machines can reason</p> <p>Richard Susskind will deliver an energizing and thought-provoking address drawn from his forthcoming book on how to think differently about artificial intelligence in law. He will challenge attendees to reimagine what legal service means in an age of intelligent systems and exponential change.</p> <p>Attendees can expect to learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How AI will reshape the roles and responsibilities of legal professionals and redefine what “expertise” means. • Why the biggest barrier to innovation is mindset, not technology — and how to cultivate a more adaptive one. • How human judgment and machine intelligence can complement one another in delivering legal outcomes. • What emerging AI tools are likely to transform access, efficiency, and client expectations. • How legal leaders can prepare their organizations for continuous reinvention in a technology-driven future. 	
10:30 am-10:45 am	Morning Break	
10:45 am-12:00 pm	<p>Innovation Lab <i>Facilitated by Lega</i></p> <p>Designing AI-Enabled Legal Service in Real Time</p> <p>A fast-paced, immersive lab where participants work in teams to design and test prototype AI-enabled legal service solutions. Guided by Lega’s innovation strategists, attendees will experiment with real use cases and engage in scenario-based exercises that surface ethical, human, and client-centered considerations.</p> <p>This session moves beyond theory into hands-on, exploratory learning—inviting participants to think boldly, challenge assumptions, and experience what it truly means to reshape legal service in an intelligent era.</p>	

Time	Tuesday, February 24 (continued)
12:00 pm- 1:30 pm	<p>Networking Lunch</p> <p>A relaxed lunch designed to give participants space to process the morning’s learning and reconnect with their own professional purpose. Conversation cards will be placed on each table to encourage thoughtful reflection on identity, leadership, and the evolving nature of work in an age of intelligent systems. This will be a moment to exhale, exchange perspectives, and integrate insights before moving into the afternoon sessions.</p>
1:30 pm- 2:15 pm	<p>Fireside Chat</p> <p>Leading Through Technological Turning Points. Three Generations, Three Journeys</p> <p>This intergenerational conversation brings together leaders from different eras of legal service transformation to explore how each generation has responded to waves of technological change. From the rise of e-discovery and knowledge management to the emergence of legal operations and data analytics, to today’s intelligent systems, the discussion will highlight how leadership practices evolve with the tools, pressures, and expectations of the time.</p> <p>The conversation will explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What “expertise” meant when each panelist entered the profession, and how it has shifted • How technological change affected identity, credibility, and client relationships • Moments when each leader had to unlearn, let go, or evolve to stay effective • What <i>human leadership</i> looks like when new technology challenges old norms • Which leadership lessons from each era should be carried forward, and which should be left behind
2:15 pm- 2:30 pm	<p>Movement Break</p>
2:30 pm- 3:30 pm	<p>Access to Justice and AI</p> <p>Innovation for Public Good</p> <p>This session offers a strategic conversation on how intelligent systems are expanding, and in some cases failing to expand, access to legal help. It will explore early issue spotting in legal aid settings, digital self-help tools, guidance platforms, and emerging technologies that enhance rather than replace human empathy and judgment. The discussion will highlight the importance of responsible governance, thoughtful scaling, human-centered design, and strong cross-sector collaboration while examining the leadership role Fellows can play in advancing meaningful and sustainable A2J innovation across the ecosystem.</p>

Time	Tuesday, February 24 (continued)
3:30 pm- 4:30 pm	Fellows Forward Exchange From Insight to Momentum
4:30 pm- 5:30 pm	Cocktail Networking Reception
5:30 pm	Adjourn for the Day
6:00 pm	Dutch Treat Dine-Around Dinners Get ready to savor great food and even better company at our Dutch-Treat Dine-Around Dinners! Connect with fellow attendees, explore top local restaurants, and make unforgettable memories as you share stories and laughter. Don't miss this deliciously social way to enhance your conference experience!

FUTURES CONFERENCE—DAY TWO

Wednesday, February 25

Time	<i>Human Leadership: Communicating Vision & Building Alignment</i>
8:00 am- 8:30 am	Registration & Continental Breakfast
8:30 am- 8:45 am	Morning Recap and Introduction to Day Two Day One will challenge us to learn, explore and innovate expertise in an age of intelligent systems and to recognize how technology is reshaping the work we do and the value we provide. We learned, we explored possibilities, and we began to experiment together in the Innovation Lab. Day two will build on that momentum by shifting from understanding change to leading it. Day Two centers the human side of leadership: communicating with clarity so others can truly hear and understand, building trust through connection, and using narrative to help others make meaning and move forward. This is where insight becomes practice and practice becomes leadership.
8:45 am- 9:45 am	KEYNOTE ADDRESS FEATURING EMMY AWARD WINNER BETH SHERMAN Leadership 2.0: Creating Connection Through Storytelling and Humor Beth is a seven-time Emmy Award winning writer and former executive producer for shows you know and love whose work has shaped some of the most recognizable voices in media. Today, she coaches senior leaders across industries on how to communicate with authenticity, build trust through clarity, and use narrative as a strategic leadership tool. Her approach blends creativity, emotional intelligence, and practical techniques that help leaders influence, inspire, and guide others through moments of change. As the pace of transformation accelerates, leadership requires more than directing strategy. It requires helping people make meaning. Drawing on her writing and coaching experience, Beth will explore how storytelling and humor strengthen human connection, deepen trust, and support cultures navigating uncertainty. Attendees can expect to learn: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How storytelling builds trust, motivates teams, and creates memorable impact.• Why humor, when used thoughtfully, enhances credibility and human connection even in serious professions.• Practical techniques for crafting concise, authentic stories that engage both logic and emotion.• How to use humor and narrative as tools to navigate uncertainty, build culture, and foster inclusion.• How to transform everyday leadership interactions into moments of clarity, empathy, and influence.

Time	Wednesday, February 25 (continued)
9:45 am-10:00 am	Movement Break
10:00 am-12:00 pm	<p>Leadership Lab <i>Sponsored by GrowthPlay and The Tilt Institute</i></p> <p>Leading with Agility, Foresight, and Narrative Purpose</p> <p>This immersive leadership lab expands on themes from Beth Sherman’s keynote, shifting from understanding communication and connection to actively practicing them. Attendees will experiment with creative adaptability, shared problem-solving, and narrative framing, which are the core leadership capacities needed to guide teams through change. The session is designed to move from inspiration to application, ensuring that leaders leave with approaches they can use immediately in their organizations.</p> <p>Take 1: “Yes And” Leadership — Thriving When Life Goes Off Script (40 minutes) Facilitated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holly Mandel, CEO, <i>iMergence</i> Corporate Improv Training • Stefan Schick, a partner at Loeb & Loeb <p>This session will build the agility, presence, and responsiveness skills that are needed when circumstances shift faster than plans can. Participants will learn how to stay grounded, listen deeply, and co-create solutions in real time.</p> <p>Take 2: Leadership Pre-Mortem — Dissecting the Anatomy of a Leadership Breakdown (40 minutes) Facilitated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marcie Borgal Shunk, President and Founder, The Tilt Institute • Lisa Simon, Chief Marketing & Business Development Officer, Holland & Hart • Alycia Sutor, Managing Director, GrowthPlay <p>Working in cross-stakeholder teams, participants will tackle a realistic future leadership challenge within the legal ecosystem. Together, they will analyze what went wrong, uncover underlying causes, and design interventions to prevent or redirect similar breakdowns. This session builds foresight, strategic awareness, and the capacity for collective sensemaking.</p> <p>Take 3: Cast the Vision — StoryCrafting a Case for Change (40 minutes) Facilitated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marcie Borgal Shunk, President and Founder, The Tilt Institute • Lisa Simon, Chief Marketing & Business Development Officer, Holland & Hart • Alycia Sutor, Managing Director, GrowthPlay <p>Building directly on Beth Sherman’s storytelling framework, participants will apply her insights to translate their pre-mortem ideas into clear, compelling narratives that inspire alignment and momentum. Each group will shape and present a short story that makes the case for the change they envision. Presentations will take place during lunch, linking leadership learning to practical influence.</p>

Time	Wednesday, February 25 (continued)
12:00 pm- 1:15 pm	<p>Networking Lunch</p> <p>Leadership in Action</p> <p>Teams share their Cast the Vision presentations during lunch. This session reinforces shared insight, connection, and the power of narrative to move ideas into practice.</p>
1:15 pm- 1:30 pm	Afternoon Break
1:30 pm- 2:30 pm	Humans vs. GPT: The Leadership Showdown
2:30 pm- 2:45 pm	<i>Conclude conference and adjourn</i>
2:45 pm	<i>Ciao!</i>