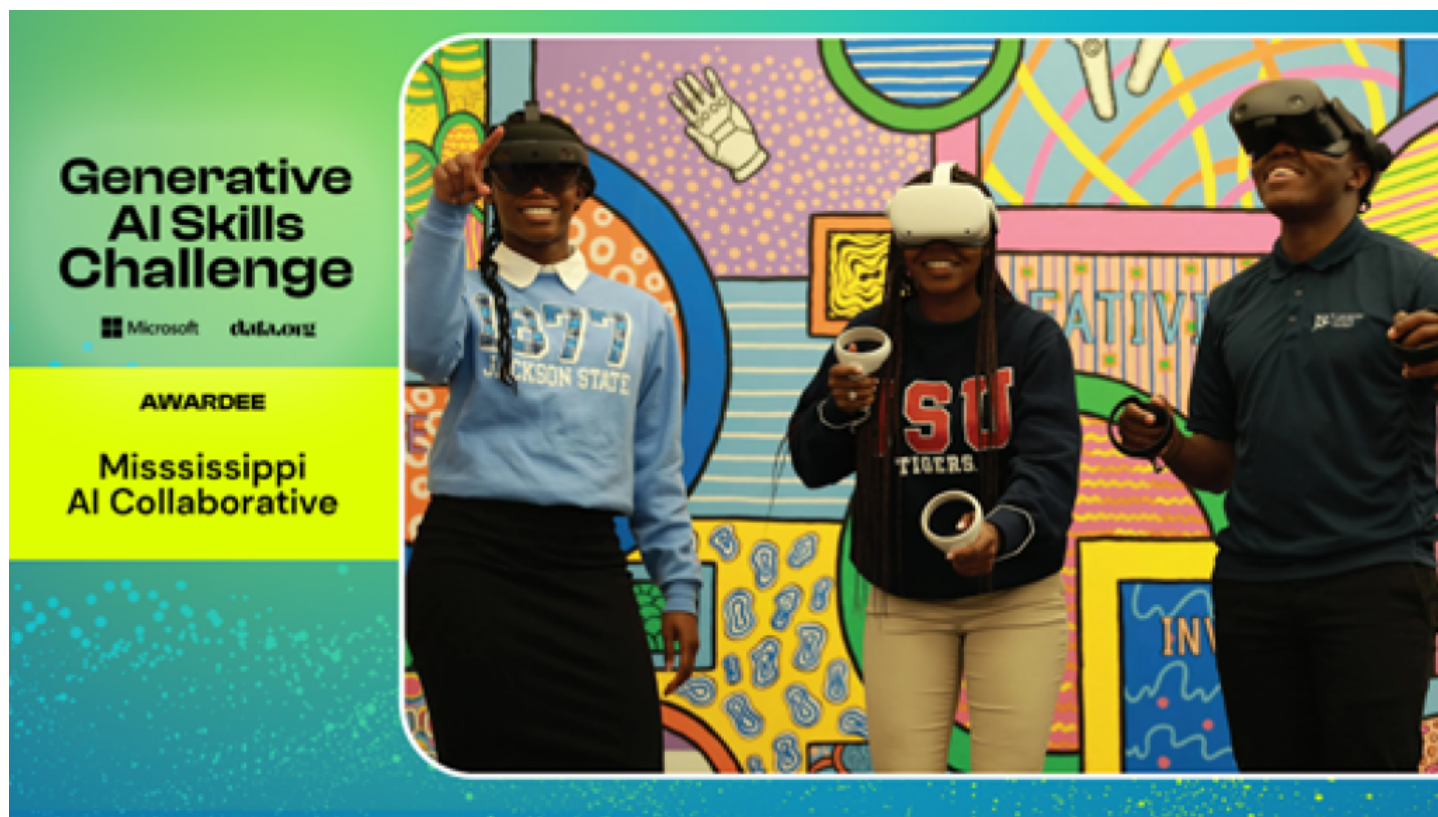


Mississippi AI Collaborative Receives Prestigious Award from data.org Supported by Microsoft



Jackson, Mississippi Nov 22, 2023 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - The Mississippi AI Collaborative (MAIC) has been awarded a significant grant by data.org. The Generative AI Skills Challenge issued a call for best-in-class organizations to train and upskill teams on generative AI to drive social impact and advance socioeconomic mobility. Five awardees from a pool of nearly 600 applications across 93 countries were selected. The Mississippi AI Collaborative, a partnership between The Mississippi Coding Academies, Jackson State University, The Mississippi Chapter of the Computer Science Teacher Association, and The Bean Path, was the chosen awardee for North America.

Learn more about this initiative: <https://data.org/initiatives/ai-challenge/>

About the Mississippi AI Collaborative

The Mississippi AI Collaborative is guiding Mississippi's transition into an AI-powered future that puts people first. Through community partnerships, education programs, and entrepreneur guidance, the collaborative aims to ensure that Mississippians can actively participate in and benefit from AI innovation.

State-wide Upskilling

The grant has enabled a state-wide AI skills competition to support individuals and organizations with digital and AI capabilities by earning a Career Essentials in Generative AI Professional Certificate

from LinkedIn Learning. This certification is now available for free to all in the state of Mississippi: <https://www.mississippiai.org/skillathon>

Empowering Educators and Students with AI Innovation

This grant will inaugurate the Mississippi chapter of the Computer Science Teacher Association's "Educator AI Lab," an engaging workshop series curated to arm educators with the expertise to infuse AI into their teaching. It will also support advanced upskilling and certifications in generative AI across the state through the MS Coding Academies.

Cultivating a Community-Centric AI Ecosystem

A central feature of this endeavor is the formation of an AI Agency, poised to become the nerve center for Jackson State student skill enhancement and small business digital upgrades. The agency, housed in the Bean Path Makerspace founded by Dr. Nashlie Sephus, will champion community-driven generative AI initiatives, propelling local empowerment and innovative breakthroughs.

Partner Perspectives

"The support from data.org, with Microsoft's backing, is a game-changer for our initiative," said Bob Buseck, Executive Director of the Mississippi Coding Academies. Buseck's diverse background from serving in the U.S. Army to leading tech advancements in various sectors fuels his passion for using technology for positive change. About the grant project he said, "It's a testament to the potential of what we can achieve here in Mississippi – creating an inclusive AI ecosystem that uplifts every community member."

Dr. Brittany L. Myburgh, Co-Principal Investigator from Jackson State University, will explore the impact of AI on ethics and equity within visual culture: "Our ultimate goal is to support a community that not only leverages AI for creativity, education, and economic growth but does so with a steadfast commitment to diversity, inclusivity, and ethical integrity."

Throughout this project, Krystal Chatman, the President of the CSTA-MS Chapter and a champion for equitable tech use in education, will advocate for inclusivity in this rapidly evolving digital landscape.

Anik Kurkjian, with her extensive experience in marketing development, community-led STEAM programs, and her role as Director of the Makerspace at The Bean Path, will be a driving force for integrating creativity and innovation into the project.

Join Our Vision

The Mississippi AI Collaborative invites you to be part of this transformative journey. For more information on our programs and participation, please visit our websites and follow our social media channels.

msaicollaborative@gmail.com

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Connect with MAIC Partners:

MS Coding Academies: [Website](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

Jackson State University: Website | Instagram | LinkedIn | Twitter | Facebook

MS CSTA: Website | Twitter

Bean Path: Website | Instagram | Facebook | Twitter | LinkedIn



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