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Midwest Research Computing and Data Consortium

Midwest RCD Newsletter

Midwest RCD Pro/le Spotlight: Benjamin Lynch

Benjamin Lynch, Director of the Minnesota Supercomputing Institute at the University of Minnesota.

Series: Exploring the Landscape of Midwest Research Computing and Data Consortium

This is a series where we're diving into the world of the Midwest Research Computing and Data Consortium, exploring its members, the challenges, and future prospects. In this edition, we spoke with Benjamin Lynch, Director of the Minnesota Supercomputing Institute at the University of Minnesota.

Ben is an active member of the Midwest RCD slack community. Feel freeto reach out if you're interested in collaborating or learning more about his work.

Read the Interview with Benjamin Lynch →

Recommend a Colleague for a Pro;le Spotlight Interview →

Midwest Research Computing and Data Consortium Annual Meeting

Mark your calendars!

As we kick off the new year, we're excited to share that the Midwest RCD Consortium Annual Network Meeting is returning **May 6–7, 2026**! This 1.5-day gathering brings together cyberinfrastructure and RCD professionals from across the region for learning, collaboration, and connection.

We'll be meeting in person at the **Big Ten Conference Center in Rosemont, IL**, with engaging sessions, practical takeaways, and plenty of time for meaningful conversations, whether you're new to the community or a long-time contributor.

Travel support will be available, and registration opens **January 15 --** be on the lookout for the registration link on our website. We hope you'll save the date and plan to join us!!

Read More about Past Annual Network Meetings →

Shape the Program: Call for Proposals (Deadline: February 13, 2026)

Have a story to share, a challenge to unpack, or an idea to explore with peers? We invite you to help shape the 2026 meeting agenda. We welcome proposals for:

- Breakout sessions
- Workshops & training focused sessions
- Facilitated discussions
- Interactive or creative formats

If it's relevant to Midwest RCD Community, we want to hear from you!

Submit Your Proposal

Invest in the Future: Student Experience Program (Deadline: March 1, 2026)

The Student Experience Program offers graduate and undergraduate students a unique opportunity to engage directly with the RCD community through hands-on participation, networking, and exposure to real-world research computing work.

Students selected for the program will receive:

- Lodging during the meeting
- Up to a $250 award (paid after the meeting)

Past participants consistently highlight the program's impact on their con$dence, professional growth, and career direction. We especially encourage applications from students with diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

[Read More about the Student Experience Program](#)

Apply Now

Meet the 2025-2026 Midwest RCD Emerging Leaders Cohort

We're excited to introduce the inaugural cohort of the Midwest RCD Consortium Emerging Leaders Program, a group of talented and motivated professionals who represent the next generation of leadership in research computing and data.

This $rst cohort brings together individuals from across the Midwest who are advancing RCD through their work, curiosity, and commitment to community. Over the course of the program, these Emerging Leaders will engage in professional development, mentorship, and collaborative learning experiences designed to strengthen leadership capacity and deepen connections across the consortium.

We're thrilled to support their growth and look forward to the ideas, energy, and perspectives they'll bring to the broader RCD community.

What The Cohort Has Been Up to So Far

The cohort has oZcially launched and is already actively engaging in the program through community-building, learning, and hands-on experiences.

Program Kickoff

The Emerging Leaders came together for a kickoff meeting focused on building connections, establishing shared goals, and setting the foundation for a collaborative learning experience. Participants began exploring leadership topics and rececting on their roles within the broader RCD ecosystem.

Guest Speaker Session

The cohort also participated in a guest speaker session with **Lois Brooks**, retired Chief Information OZcer of the University of Wisconsin–Madison, via Zoom. Lois rececect on 41 years in higher education IT, from the early days when "email" meant handwritten letters, spreadsheets were done with pencil and ledger paper, networks were built by running cables through ceiling tiles, and high-performance computing was just getting started. She went on to lead major initiatives at Stanford, Oregon State, and UW–Madison, sharing stories that were inspiring, insightful, and full of hard-earned wisdom.

The session was especially timely, as the cohort visited UW–Madison the following week, connecting these lessons to real-world experiences on campus. Stay tuned as we share more about their visit and growth!

First Site Visit: University of Wisconsin-Madison

The cohort began their journey with an immersive site visit at the **University of Wisconsin–Madison**, gaining a $rsthand look at research computing and data operations in action. Over three days, the cohort explored institutional RCD structures, met with local experts, and engaged in meaningful conversations about leadership in research computing.

A huge thank-you to Todd Shechter, our Steering Committee member and CTO of UW–Madison, and his team for hosting this deep dive. From a welcoming reception to attending the Information and Technology Leadership Conference, and touring campus RCD centers, this behind-the-scenes experience provided valuable insights into how research computing teams support their campuses, helping the cohort build practical skills and expand their leadership toolkit.

This is just the beginning of an exciting journey for these emerging leaders!

Residency Fellows Program: Funding Available

Have plans to spend time at another Midwest institution to grow your expertise and strengthen CI collaboration? The Midwest RCD **Residency Fellows Program** is here to support you.

The program provides **$1,200 in travel support** for selected individuals to complete a self-arranged, week-long residency at another Midwest institution. It's a great opportunity to deepen professional connections, gain hands-on experience, and explore new ideas with peers across the region.

Residencies should be co-developed by the applicant and the host institution and must align with the Consortium's mission of collaboration and capacity building in research computing and data. Fellows are asked to share a short reflection or summary of their experience after the visit.

Interested? Reach out for details or submit your proposal at pti@iu.edu

Affinity Groups: Learn More About the Application Process

Affinity Groups provide a platform for collaboration around shared topics of interest in research computing and data.

Have an idea? Propose a new group, and we'll support you in bringing it to life! We can provide a limited $nancial support to help you organize events, discussions, and activities that bene$t the research computing and data community. Current groups include:

- AI in RCD

- Cryo-EM

- Next Generation Data Centers

- Globus Compute

- Scienti$c Cloud Computing

- CI Value: Return on Investment and Impact

For further information, please email us at pti@iu.edu

Learn More About Affinity Groups

Affinity Group Application Form

Student Opportunities

Know an event to include here? _____ ____ _____
Submit your upcoming student opportunity

Applications due February 15, 2026!

2026 Summer ACERS Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) at Michigan State University

The Advanced Computational Research Experience for Students (ACERS) is a 10-week, NSF-funded program that brings together undergraduates from across the country to work on interdisciplinary computational and data science research projects. Participants receive training in high-performance computing, collaborate with top faculty, and gain experience using modern supercomputers while contributing to cutting-edge research in fields such

as biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, and climate science.

Various application deadlines!
Ewing "Rusty" Lusk Travel Scholarship

Want to attend ACM SIGHPC conferences but need funding? The Ewing "Rusty" Lusk Travel Scholarship can help!

The Ewing "Rusty" Lusk Travel Scholarship provides conference registration plus up to $1,600 in travel reimbursement to help graduate students attend PASC, PEARC, and SC conferences when they lack institutional funding support.

Applications due March 16, 2026!
SC26 Student Volunteers

Student volunteers play a key role in supporting conference attendees and the conference overall. Undergraduate and graduate students help with the administration of the conference and have the opportunity to participate in the Students@SC program, explore the Exhibits, attend technical presentations, and develop lasting professional connections. The Student Volunteers program accepts a large number of students, both domestic and international, with the goal of welcoming new members into the HPC community.

Accepting applications NOW!
ACM/IEEE CS George Michael Memorial HPC Fellowship

Endowed in memory of George Michael, one of the founders of the SC Conference series, the ACM/IEEE CS George Michael Memorial HPC Fellowship honors exceptional PhD students throughout the world whose research focus is on high-performance computing applications, networking, storage, or large-scale data analysis using the most powerful computers that are currently available.

The award committee is selected by the two societies and includes past winners as well as leaders in the field. The Fellowship includes a $5000 honorarium, recognition on the ACM, IEEE CS, and ACM SIGHPC websites,

and travel expenses to attend SC. The recipients will be honored at the SC Conference Awards Ceremony.

Various application deadlines
[Sandia National Laboratories - Center for Computing Research](#)

The CCR offers a variety of pathways for graduate and undergraduate students to engage in cutting-edge computational research. Students have joined through programs such as the Computer Science Research Institute Summer Program, MARTIANS, Sustainable Horizons Institute, NNSA internship programs, Grande CARES, NSF Mathematical Sciences Graduate Internship, and the University Research Association Fellowship. With such a wide range of projects and topics, there are opportunities to match many interests and skill sets.

Various application deadlines
[U.S. Naval Research Laboratory Student Programs](#)

NRL participates in several Student Programs, each with their own features and requirements. Select a program for more information and learn how to apply for each one.

Various application deadlines
[IEEE Computer Society Student Achievements in Computing](#)

Get recognized for your achievements as a student member of the IEEE Computer Society by applying for a scholarship or award program.

Reach Out To Explore Ideas and Opportunities

We're happy to meet with you in person and discuss ideas. To schedule a meeting, please email us at **pti@iu.edu**, and we'll get back to you as soon as possible to coordinate next steps.

[Join/Follow Our LinkedIn Page](#)

Upcoming Related Events and Opportunities

Know an event to include here? _____ _____

[Submit your ~~Midwest~~ RCD-related event or opportunity.](#)

Various • Online submission
[ACCESS Events & Training](#)

ACCESS is an acronym that stands for "Advanced Cyberinfrastructure Coordination Ecosystem: Services & Support." ACCESS is a program established and funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) to help researchers and educators utilize the nation's advanced computing systems and services. Almost any computer application that requires more than a desktop or laptop could qualify as needing an advanced computing system.

Tuesday - Wednesday, April 14 - 15, 2026
[NSF ACCESS Regional AI Workshop & OSC Research Symposium](#)

OSC will host a free, two-day event at Ohio State University's Fawcett Center

in Columbus, OH, bringing together researchers, educators, students, and industry partners to explore AI in research and teaching. The NSF ACCESS Regional AI Workshop (Apr 14–15) will focus on integrating AI tools into research and classroom settings, followed by the OSC Research Symposium (Apr 15) showcasing AI-driven work using OSC's HPC resources. Free to attend with registration required; meals included, with hotel support available for eligible travelers. Registration opens January 15, 2026.

Monday - Thursday, April 13 - 16, 2026 • Chicago, IL
Internet2 Community Exchange

CommEX26 brings IT leaders and their teams together for strategic discussions, peer-driven collaboration, and leadership development focused on advancing research and education technology. As Internet2 celebrates 30 years of community-driven progress, this year's Community Exchange returns to Chicago to connect the global R&E community around shared challenges and future-focused solutions. Join your peers to collaborate, lead, and help shape a hopeful future for research and education. Early bird registration is now open.

Tuesday - Wednesday, May 6 - 7, 2026 • Rosemont, IL
Midwest RCD Consortium Annual Network Meeting

Mark your calendars for the 2026 Midwest RCD Annual Network Retreat! These in-person meetings, hosted across network locations by consortium members, bring together CI professionals and students to share knowledge, explore mutual interests, and advance accelerator program goals. Agendas may include co-presented talks by senior/junior professionals and student-led panels, offering unique professional development opportunities. Interested in presenting your work? Get in touch with us!

Sunday-Thursday, July 26-30, 2026 • Minneapolis, MN
PEARC26: Practice and Experience in Advanced Research Computing

The EDUCAUSE Annual Conference connects the best thinkers in higher education technology. This is THE event where professionals and technology providers from around the world gather to network, share ideas,

grow professionally, and discover solutions to today's challenges. It's the largest gathering of your peers…people you can relate to, learn from, and stay connected to throughout the year.

Wednesday, September 23, 2026
[Oklahoma Supercomputing Symposium 2026](#)

Mark your calendars for the Oklahoma Supercomputing Symposium 2026, taking place Wednesday, September 23, 2026, 9 AM–5 PM CT. The symposium will be held virtually on Zoom, bringing together researchers, educators, and students to explore the latest in supercomputing and computational science.

Tuesday - Friday, September 29, 2026 - October 2 • Denver, CO
[EDUCAUSE Annual Conference](#)

The EDUCAUSE Annual Conference connects the best thinkers in higher education technology. This is THE event where professionals and technology providers from around the world gather to network, share ideas, grow professionally, and discover solutions to today's challenges. It's the largest gathering of your peers…people you can relate to, learn from, and stay connected to throughout the year.

Sunday - Friday, November 15 - 20, 2026 • Chicago, IL
[SC26: The International Conference for High Performance Computing, Networking, Storage, and Analysis](#)
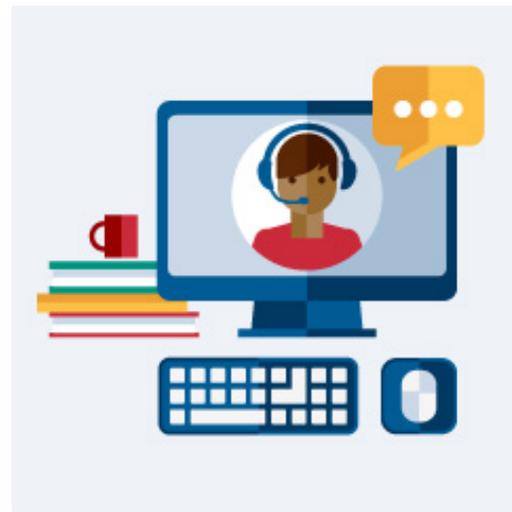
Plan to attend the SC26! Each year, SC provides the leading technical program for the HPC community. The Program is designed to share best practices in all areas of high performance computing.

Connect with the Community

[Slack | Join Slack](#) →

[LinkedIn Group | Page](#) →

AI in RCD AInity Group

This group explores the intersection of Arti$cial Intelligence (AI) and Research Computing in higher education and research institutions. We provide a space for professionals to discuss how AI is reshaping research support, infrastructure planning, and policy development. Members share experiences, tackle common challenges, and highlight lessons learned to advance responsible and effective AI integration in research environments.

Join the AI in RCD A^nity Group   →

Cryo-EM AInity Group

The Cryo-EM Affinity Group is a community of practice focused on supporting researchers and facilitators working with cryo-electron microscopy (cryo-EM) across the Midwest. Cryo-EM is a rapidly growing set of experimental techniques for studying biological structures at scales ranging from entire cells down to individual proteins. These methods come with complex workflows that span various devices, data types, and computational platforms. The group brings together those facilitating cryo-EM research, from RCD professionals to core facility staff, to share lessons learned, collaborate on common challenges, and build a shared understanding of tools, workflows, and needs across institutions.

Join the Cryo-EM Affinity Group   →

Next-Gen DC AInity Group

The Next-Generation Data Center group focuses on learning about advancements in facilities and operations of data centers.

[Join the Next-Gen DC Affinity Group](#) →

Globus Compute AInity Group

We strive to build an inclusive and equitable culture which will promote and increase diversity. This group is being created to ensure that there is diversity in committees, events (annual meetings), and leadership positions.

[Join the Globus Compute Affinity Group](#) →

ROI AInity Group

This group focuses on approaches to gauging impact as well as quantitative and qualitative measures needed to communicate the bene$ts of investments in cyberinfrastructure on our campuses.

[Join the ROI Affinity Group](#) →

Scientific Cloud Affinity Group

This group focuses on how HPC centers approach cloud computing to support increasingly diverse scientific and engineering research and education endeavors and what skill sets CI professionals will need to support cloud workflows and data management.

[Join the Scientific Cloud Affinity Group](#) →

About the Midwest Research Computing and Data Consortium

Regional stakeholders working collectively in a trusted forum can shape the future by working collectively on topics of mutual interest, by onboarding organizations that $nd value in the mission of the organization, by sharing information transparently, and by providing opportunities for CI professionals staff members in our organization to contribute, to be mentored, to belong to a cohort, and to become leaders.

Read more about Midwest RCD →

RCN:CIP: Midwest Research Computing and Data Consortium

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