

# Cultivating Success Begins with Cultivating Belonging

AAC&U CLASS 2026

Abby Crew, College Unbound  
Jeffrey Yan, Digication



“  
*I grew into leadership the way some people grow into their own name slowly at first, almost by accident, and then all at once with clarity. What began as surviving systems not built for me became a practice of reshaping them...Over time, I learned to lead from my lived experience, turning reflection into a strategy and storytelling into a tool for change.*



# The College Unbound Student

71%

Women

79%

Pell Eligible

*Transforming lived experience into academic credit.*

M  
High  
38

Average Age

76%

BIPOC

# COLLEGE UNBOUND



“The challenge before us is not whether GenAI will shape higher education, but whether we will shape its use in ways that strengthen learning, integrity, and the common good.”

**Lynn Pasquarella, President  
AAC&U**

“Foreword.” *The AI Challenge: How College Faculty Assess the Present and Future of Higher Education in the Age of AI*, American Association of Colleges and Universities,

# COLLEGE UNBOUND

## Questions for Consideration at CU

- How might CU integrate AI into teaching and learning, and related operational supports while remaining **grounded in our values**?
- In what ways can AI serve as a **learning resource** that strengthens **critical thinking and creativity** rather than taking the place of learning?
- What responsibility does CU have to ensure graduates are prepared to use **AI effectively** and **ethically** in their workplaces?

# AI as a Listener and a Mirror

## The Reflection Loop



*The AI translates natural language into the academic framework in real-time.*

# The Transformation

## BEFORE

*“I have no idea  
where to start.”*

Hesitant. Overwhelmed.  
Feeling like an outsider.



## AFTER

*“Can I come back to this?  
I have more to say.”*

Empowered. An expert of  
her own experience.

**This is the belonging story.**

# The Faculty Signal

## Student Reflection Analytics Dashboard



*Faculty see which students are struggling and which are having breakthroughs allowing for targeted human intervention.*

# Live Demo

---

Seeing Digication's AI Guided Reflection and Analytics in Action

My CU journey transformed not just how I learn, but how I see myself. I entered CU as a student parent fighting for stability, carrying the weight of caregiving, work, and survival. I am leaving as a leader with a clear vision for systems change, someone who knows her worth, trusts her voice, and understands the power of her lived experience.

**COLLEGE  
UNBOUND**

The most transformative part was realizing that I don't have to shrink or apologize for the life I've lived. My story is not a barrier; it's the blueprint for the work I'm called to do. CU didn't just educate me; it gave me validation, community, and the confidence to build programs, advocate for families, and step into graduate school with

As I stepped deeper into advocacy and organizational work, my leadership shifted from personal resilience to collective transformation. I began creating structures that help others feel seen, supported, and empowered to lead. My voice strengthened, my vision sharpened, and my purpose expanded. Now my leadership is not just about what I've overcome, it's about the systems I am redesigning, the communities I am nurturing, and the future I am building with courage, clarity, and care.

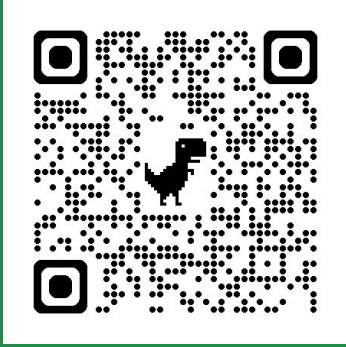
Technology didn't create the belonging.

**Technology made the space.**

---

**What are you making space for?**

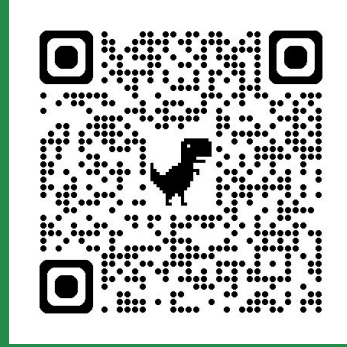
# Let's Connect



## Abby Crew

Assistant Provost and  
Director of Curriculum Development  
**College Unbound**

[abby.crew@collegeunbound.edu](mailto:abby.crew@collegeunbound.edu)



## Jeffrey Yan

Cofounder & CEO  
**Digication**

[jeff@digication.com](mailto:jeff@digication.com)