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July 30, 2025

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Administration Freezes \$108 Million In Federal Funds To Duke's Medical School And Healthcare System

The [New York Times](#) (7/29, Cameron, Bender, Kanno-Youngs) reports that the Trump Administration has frozen \$108 million in federal funds for Duke University's medical school and healthcare system. This action follows accusations of "systemic racial discrimination" at Duke, as stated by two Administration officials. The officials claim Duke violated Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. The funding cut could become permanent if violations are confirmed. Duke University is considering \$350 million in budget cuts and has already imposed a hiring freeze. Duke's president, Vincent E. Price, mentioned potential layoffs due to the funding loss.

[Fox News](#) (7/29, Creitz) reports, "In a letter to Duke President Vincent Price, Chairman of the Board of Trustees Adam Silver and School of Medicine Dean Mary Klotman, Secretaries Robert F. Kennedy Jr., and Linda McMahon outlined that racial preferences in hiring, student admissions, governance and patient care 'betray' the mission of American" healthcare and "endanger human lives."

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Michigan State University To Administer Apple Manufacturing Academy In Detroit

[CNBC](#) (7/29, Leswing) reports Apple will open the Apple Manufacturing Academy in downtown Detroit this August. Administered by Michigan State University, the program will



offer workshops on manufacturing and artificial intelligence for small and medium-sized businesses. Apple said its engineers will help lead the sessions and that the initiative aims to train the next generation of US manufacturers.

AI Disrupts Entry-Level Hiring For College Graduates

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/29, Subscription Publication) reports employers are increasingly turning to artificial intelligence instead of hiring recent college graduates for entry-level roles, weakening a longstanding workplace norm. As firms train fewer young workers, they risk shrinking the pool of future leaders and skilled professionals.

From ASEE

Make Your Voice Heard: ASEE's Code of Ethics

Proposed revisions to ASEE's Code of Ethics are now available for public comment. ASEE community feedback will be incorporated before the final ASEE Board review later this year.

The comment period is open through **July 31, 2025**.

Provide your feedback: [ASEE Code of Ethics: Public Comment 2025](#).

HIGHER EDUCATION

Harvard Will Comply With DHS Demands For Employee Forms

[Bloomberg](#) (7/29, Lorin, Knox, Subscription Publication) reports, "Harvard University said it would turn over employment forms for thousands of staff to comply with demands from the Department of Homeland Security." This "federal inquiry applies to all current employees and any individual who worked for the university in the past year, Harvard said late Tuesday in a message to its community." While "federal regulations entitle the government to review paperwork known as Form I-9 documents," the university "said it won't share records for students employed in roles only available to students and that it's evaluating whether such a request complies with privacy protection obligations."

Directive To Shrink Federal Agencies Has Affected Education Fraud Enforcement

[The Atlantic](#) (7/29, Carey) reports the Department of Education's fraud-prevention team was largely dismantled in March, following President Trump's directive to shrink federal agencies. More than 80 percent of fraud staff were fired, leaving oversight efforts nearly defunct. Experts warn this gutting will embolden scammers and endanger vulnerable students, especially as Pell Grant access expands to short-term training programs lacking sufficient safeguards.

UCLA Violated Civil Rights Of Jewish, Israeli Students, DOJ Says

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (7/29) reports the DOJ "said Tuesday that UCLA violated the civil rights of Jewish and Israeli students who reported harassment and intimidation during a spring 2024 pro-Palestinian campus

encampment.” The move is “heightening the political tensions between the University of California and the Trump Administration.” In a letter addressed to UC President Michael Drake, DOJ officials “said ‘Jewish and Israeli students at UCLA were subjected to severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive harassment that created a hostile environment by members of the encampment.’”

UCLA To Pay \$6 Million To Resolve Antisemitism Claims. [Bloomberg](#) (7/29, Subscription Publication) reports UCLA agreed to pay over \$6 million to settle discrimination complaints from Jewish students and faculty. The complaints alleged UCLA allowed a “Jew Exclusion Zone” during pro-Palestinian protests in spring 2024. The settlement allocates \$2.33 million to organizations combating antisemitism, including Hillel at UCLA and the Anti-Defamation League.

Immigration Crackdown Affecting International Students

[The Hill](#) (7/29, Cochran) reports President Trump’s immigration policies are increasingly impacting international students and undocumented immigrants in higher education. The Administration is investigating universities over DACA scholarship programs, enforcing stricter visa checks, and detaining students involved in protests. Advocates warn that new rules—such as limits on post-grad work and study extensions—could deter foreign applicants. Calls are growing for institutions to push back through legal, political, and administrative means to support affected students.

Northwestern Cuts More Than 400 Staff Positions Amid Federal Funding Freeze

The [Chicago Tribune](#) (7/29) reports Northwestern University has cut about 425 staff positions, roughly half of which were already vacant, in response to a \$790 million federal funding freeze by the Trump Administration. President Michael Schill said the layoffs, affecting multiple departments, will reduce staff-related expenses by five percent. The freeze, tied to investigations into campus antisemitism, has led to 98 stop-work orders and 51 grant terminations. Despite prior cost-cutting measures, including a hiring freeze, the university faces a growing budget gap. Schill cited rising healthcare and labor costs, along with federal policy changes, as contributing factors.

Michigan Awards \$1 Million To Boost FAFSA Completion

[Diverse Issues in Higher Education](#) (7/29) reports Michigan awarded nearly \$1 million to 50 students through its “Ticket to Tuition” giveaway, which is aimed at increasing FAFSA completion among first-time filers. Winners received \$10,000 or \$50,000 in college savings. The giveaway is part of a broader effort to address declining FAFSA rates and promote postsecondary access. The initiative drew over 21,000 entries and contributed to 50,000 total FAFSA completions.

Judge Blocks Virginia Governor’s Disputed University Board Picks

The [Washington Post](#) (7/29, Rosenzweig-Ziff, Vozzella) reports a Virginia judge barred eight people, appointed by Gov. Glenn Youngkin (R), from serving on public university boards after a Senate committee rejected them. The ruling sided with Democrats who argued the rejections were constitutionally binding. The ruling halts the appointees’ participation at the University of Virginia, George Mason University and the Virginia Military Institute. Youngkin’s office disputes the decision and plans to appeal.

Report Finds Colleges With Free Speech Protections Growing

The [Washington Times](#) (7/29) reports that for the first time in two decades, more US colleges protect student free speech than restrict it, according to a report by the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression. Seventy-three schools earned a “green light” rating, while “red light” campuses with severe speech restrictions fell to 72. Institutions such as Dartmouth, Clemson and Vanderbilt improved their ratings, while

some schools, like Villanova, still maintain broad restrictions. Most campuses now fall under “yellow light” status for vague speech rules.

AWS AI Initiative Boosts Mississippi State University Recruitment

[WCBI-TV](#) Columbus, MS (7/29, Johnson) reports Mississippi State University partnered with AWS to launch an AI recruitment tool analyzing student data to tailor outreach. The program targets prospects through search histories and personalizes MSU services. MSU VP Sid Salter said, “This tool will help us find students interested in STEM fields.” The six-month free trial may expand to alumni outreach. Amazon’s partner Quintilian will hire two MSU interns for data analysis.

Catholic Colleges Merge To Survive Financial Pressures

[Higher Ed Dive](#) (7/29) reports St. Ambrose University will absorb Mount Mercy University by summer 2025 in a strategic move to consolidate resources and stabilize finances amid rising costs and falling enrollment. The merged institution will retain Mount Mercy’s name and mission while sharing academic and administrative functions. The merger reflects a broader trend among Catholic colleges confronting demographic shifts, school closures, and declining student numbers. Experts say such consolidations are increasingly necessary but often delayed.

Migrant Higher Education Programs Remain Frozen

[Inside Higher Ed](#) (7/29, Weissman, Alonso) reports the Trump Administration has released around \$5 billion in previously frozen education funding, including \$716 million for adult education, which is alleviating pressure on community colleges. However, \$52 million for postsecondary migrant education programs remains withheld, and that is impacting initiatives like the High School Equivalency and College Assistance for Migrants programs. College leaders remain wary, as Trump’s 2026 budget proposes eliminating these efforts entirely.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Robotic Hands Gain Human-Like Sensation Using AI

[WCJB-TV](#) Gainesville, FL (7/29) reports that Dr. Eric Du and his team at the University of Florida’s Herbert Wertheim College of Engineering are developing robotic hands with human-like tactile abilities using advanced sensors and artificial intelligence. Dr. Du explained that these robotic hands aim to replicate human touch, enabling robots to perform delicate tasks with dexterity. The project could lead to advancements in manufacturing, healthcare, and remote operations. Dr. Du emphasized the role of AI as the “brain” for processing tactile data, enhancing robots’ ability to understand complex environments.

Texas A&M Researchers Develop Smart Irrigation Using Doorbell Cameras

[Tech Xplore](#) (7/29) reports Texas A&M researchers have developed ERIC, a smart irrigation system that uses doorbell cameras and AI to optimize lawn watering. ERIC analyzes video footage to estimate rainfall and adjust irrigation schedules, potentially saving homeowners up to \$29 and 9,000 gallons of water monthly. Unlike traditional systems reliant on imprecise weather data, ERIC offers hyper-local accuracy. The project builds on Texas A&M’s WaterMyYard initiative and won Best Paper at BuildSys ‘24. Researchers aim to expand ERIC’s public use through AgriLife Extension, advancing sustainable water use through accessible technology.

INDUSTRY NEWS

Skild AI Unveils New AI Model For Robots

[Reuters](#) (7/29, Sriram) reports that robotics startup Skild AI, supported by Amazon and SoftBank, introduced Skild Brain, an AI model for robots, on Tuesday. The model enhances robots' ability to think and navigate like humans and is designed for diverse applications, from assembly lines to humanoids. Demonstrations showed Skild-powered robots performing tasks like climbing stairs and picking up objects. Co-founders Deepak Pathak and Abhinav Gupta highlighted the model's training on simulated episodes and human-action videos. Skild's approach allows rapid capability expansion across industries, despite the physical deployment challenges in robotics.

AI-Powered Autonomous Vehicles Mimic Human Driving Behavior

[ComputerWorld](#) (7/29, Mearian) reports that artificial intelligence-powered autonomous vehicles are increasingly adopting human-like driving behaviors, including honking and assertive maneuvers, to enhance safety. Tesla's Shadow Mode observes human driving to improve its system, while Waymo's robotaxis, powered by AI, learn from millions of miles to adapt to local traffic norms. Waymo's Director of Product Management, David Margines, emphasizes that assertive driving can enhance safety. The vehicles now demonstrate more confidence at intersections and while merging. University of San Francisco's William Riggs notes Waymo's improved adaptability in San Francisco traffic. Zoox, owned by Amazon, uses targeted audio for communication. Transportation engineering professor Kara Kockelman suggests AVs are safer, with fewer crashes than human drivers, due to comprehensive environmental awareness.

Startup Using AI And Robotics To Enhance Fish Processing

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (7/29) reports that Shinkei Systems, an El Segundo-based startup, is using artificial intelligence and robotics to enhance fish processing through a traditional Japanese method called ikejime. Their robot aims to improve flavor, texture, and shelf life while ensuring humane treatment. CEO Saif Khawaja emphasizes making high-quality fish accessible in the US. The company raised \$22 million, bringing total funding to \$30 million. The robot processes fish quickly on fishing boats, identifying species and targeting brain and gills. Shinkei plans to expand operations and product offerings this year.

Elon Musk's Boring Company Planning To Build Tunnel From Nashville Airport To Downtown

The [Louisville \(KY\) Courier-Journal](#) (7/29) reports, "Elon Musk's The Boring Company plans to build" Music City Loop, "a high-speed tunnel from Nashville International Airport to downtown." Nashville "was selected by The Boring Company for its rapid growth, strong economic potential and dedication to embracing smart, forward-looking infrastructure," state officials said in a statement. "The Music City Loop will remove thousands of vehicles from surface roads each day, easing traffic congestion while creating numerous job opportunities for Tennesseans." Top leaders in business and politics across Tennessee convened at BNA on July 28 to announce the 'major economic development' project that's been in the works for some time. The tunnel will cover approximately 10 miles from Nashville's city center to Tennessee's largest airport once complete."

ENGINEERING AND PUBLIC POLICY

US Department Of Defense Launches \$10 Million 3D Printing Program

[3D Printing Industry](#) (7/29, Tyrer-Jones) reports that the US Department of Defense has initiated a \$10 million program to establish a reliable supply base for 3D printed parts. Led by the Defense Logistics Agency, the JAMA IV IDIQ Pilot Parts Program is the fourth phase of a project ensuring 3D printed components meet military standards. Vendors will bid for contracts via the Defense Department's Internet Bid Board System. The program's first task involves manufacturing ten part types using various additive technologies. The

initiative aims to create a flexible, fast-track contract vehicle for sourcing 3D printed components for military use.

Robot Security Program Paused Over Privacy Concerns

[Bethesda \(MD\) Magazine](#) (7/29, Bixby) reports that members of the Montgomery County Council expressed privacy concerns over a Department of Transportation pilot program deploying a robot for surveillance in a Silver Spring parking garage. The program, which began in June, involves a 420-pound robot that records footage for law enforcement. Councilmembers, including Kate Stewart and Natali Fani-González, were unaware of the program until media coverage. Stewart requested the program pause for community input sessions. MCDOT Director Chris Conklin stated the robot aims to enhance security and reduce direct interactions. The program will resume after community feedback.

ALSO IN THE NEWS

EV Manufacturing Drives US Economic Growth

[Forbes](#) (7/29, Swan) reports that the American manufacturing sector is experiencing a resurgence, driven by the electric vehicle industry. Manufacturers have created and retained 194,500 US EV-related jobs, with significant investments from automotive OEMs and startups. Panasonic Energy is expanding its battery production in De Soto, Kansas, reflecting increased EV manufacturing and battery production capacity. The US EV market is projected to reach \$95.90 billion in 2025 and \$221.46 billion by 2032. Panasonic's Nevada factory produces 6 million batteries daily, and its Kansas facility is expected to create 4,000 jobs. Panasonic focuses on job training and educational opportunities to support this growth.

TUESDAY'S LEAD STORIES

- [University Of California Admits Largest Class Of In-State Undergraduates](#)
- [Twenty-Two States Have Enacted Laws Censoring Higher Ed, Analysis Finds](#)
- [Sanofi And UT Austin Develop AI Model For mRNA Efficiency](#)
- [Robots Dominate China's AI Summit](#)
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