



Blackbaud Expands AI Leadership with Platform for Good™ and Lantern™ at bbcon 2026

October 5, 2026

As organizations face growing demands and limited capacity, Blackbaud introduces new connected operating system and fundraising-specific language model to ensure the social impact sector gets the best outcomes from AI

COLUMBUS, Ohio, Oct. 5, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- Blackbaud (NASDAQ: BLKB), the world's leading provider of AI-powered solutions for social impact, brought together thousands of nonprofit, education, corporate social responsibility and philanthropy professionals at bbcon 2026 to explore how connected data, purpose-built AI and intelligent action can help organizations expand capacity and accelerate impact.

Conference attendees were the first to hear about [Blackbaud's Platform for Good™](#) a connected foundation designed to bring together data, intelligence, workflows, AI and partners across the Blackbaud ecosystem. Built beneath the solutions organizations already use, Platform for Good is designed to help customers identify opportunities faster, make more informed decisions and act with greater confidence.

Blackbaud also made a splash unveiling [Lantern™](#), the first domain-specific language model purpose-built to optimize fundraising intelligence. Built through a strategic collaboration with Databricks, Lantern brings more than four decades of Blackbaud's fundraising expertise, data, and context, to reflect real world patterns and the unique complexity of fundraising. Embedded in the Intelligence Layer, Lantern will power tailored intelligence directly where customers already work.

"Last year, we introduced a vision for how AI could help social impact organizations work smarter," said Mike Gianoni, president, CEO and vice chairman of the board of directors, Blackbaud. "At bbcon 2026, we focused on what happens next: bringing together connected data, purpose-built intelligence, trusted expertise and secure AI experiences into the workflows organizations use every day. The opportunity isn't simply to add AI to existing processes. It's to help organizations unlock more capacity, make better decisions and ultimately drive greater impact."

The company also showcased a broad portfolio of innovations across fundraising, finance, education, marketing and giving, including an expanded lineup of Agents for Good™, connected finance experiences and new ecosystem partnerships. Together, these innovations demonstrated how technology can help organizations spend less time navigating complexity and more time advancing their missions.

"bbcon 2026 has been a great experience, from the exciting announcements on the mainstage, to the breakout sessions and personal connections made," said Michelle Edgerton, executive vice president and chief advancement officer, YMCA of the North. "I've been a Blackbaud user for more than 25 years now, and my team trusts the solutions to power our daily work. I'm particularly excited for the enhancements coming to Raiser's Edge NXT, which keeps getting better, and for the intelligence that Lantern will bring, allowing us to surface better insights so that we can focus on raising the funds we need to best serve our communities. Who better than Blackbaud to deliver this social impact specific innovation?"

Industry Leaders Share Perspectives on AI and the Future of Social Impact

In addition to product innovation, bbcon 2026 featured conversations with technology leaders, customers and sector experts focused on responsible AI adoption and organizational transformation.

Day two keynote speaker Priya Lakhani, founder and CEO of CENTURY Tech and a leading voice on AI, innovation, and ethics, spoke about the importance of responsible and intentional AI adoption. She then joined a leadership panel alongside Carrie Cobb, chief data and AI officer at Blackbaud, Renee Ducre, chief information officer at UNCF, and Tim Cerato, assistant vice president of constituent relationship management at Boston University. Moderated by Stephanie Mehta, chief executive officer and chief content officer of Mansueto Ventures, publisher of Inc. and Fast Company, the panel explored lessons learned, implementation strategies and practical approaches to AI adoption.

The conference concluded with a fireside conversation featuring Tony and Grammy Award-Winning Leslie Odom, Jr., who joined Blackbaud leaders to discuss creativity, resilience, change leadership and the role of purpose in driving meaningful progress.

Celebrating Excellence Across the Social Impact Community

A hallmark of every bbcon is celebrating the organizations and individuals creating meaningful change in communities around the world.

During the conference, Blackbaud recognized the recipients of the [2026 Blackbaud Impact Awards](#), honoring organizations and leaders whose innovative approaches and commitment to mission are making a lasting difference.

This year's North America winners include:

- **Changemaker Award:** Le Phare, Enfants Et Familles
- **Data Strategist Award:** A Kid Again
- **Fueling Greatness Award:** Mary Immaculate Catholic Parish & School
- **Futurist Award:** Boston University
- **Silo Buster Award:** Starfish Family Services
- **Outstanding Leadership Award:** Michelle Edgerton, Executive Vice President and Chief Advancement Officer, YMCA of the North
- **Rising Star Award:** Leah Cooper, Program Manager, MillerKnoll Foundation

Blackbaud also celebrated innovation within its partner ecosystem through its annual [Partner Network Awards](#) program and recognized emerging technology innovators participating in the Social Good Startup Program.

The [2026 Social Good Startup Program showcase](#) winners are:

Judges' Choice Awards

- [DonorAtlas](#), which equips fundraisers with AI-powered prospect research, helping organizations identify high-potential donors and uncover actionable insights faster.
- [Apps NXT](#), which helps nonprofits streamline fundraising, stewardship and event management through purpose-built applications that work directly within Blackbaud Raiser's Edge NXT®.
- [Untapped Solutions](#) (Corporate Impact distinction), which helps employers build and scale second-chance hiring initiatives, connecting them with qualified talent facing barriers to employment, including people impacted by the justice system.

People's Choice Award

- [Bridgit](#), an AI-powered platform that helps nonprofits unlock the full value of their data by connecting systems, automating data cleanup and mapping, and making information easier to use across teams.

Winners receive a 2027 conference sponsorship and dedicated sales enablement and marketing opportunities.

Looking Ahead

As organizations across the social impact sector continue exploring how AI, automation, and connected systems can help expand impact, bbcon 2026 reinforced a common theme: technology is most powerful when it is purpose-built, anchored in trust, and connects fragmented systems for more seamless and intelligent workflows.

Blackbaud envisions a future where resources are unleashed at the speed of need. By bringing together social impact leaders, technology innovators, and mission-driven organizations from around the world, bbcon continues to serve as a forum for learning, collaboration, and shared inspiration around what's possible for the future of the sector.

About Blackbaud

[Blackbaud](#) (NASDAQ: BLKB) is the world's leading provider of AI-powered solutions for social impact. Serving nonprofits, educational institutions, companies committed to corporate social responsibility, and individual change makers, Blackbaud propels impact at scale with the sector's most intelligent solutions for fundraising and engagement, education solutions, financial management and CSR and grantmaking. With the deepest expertise powered by the world's largest philanthropic data set, the most connected workflows, and the most powerful impact network, Blackbaud's solutions are building a future where resources are unleashed at the speed of need. Blackbaud has been recognized by Fast Company, Newsweek, Quartz, Forbes and more for AI innovation, responsible leadership and workplace excellence. Blackbaud has operations in the United States, Australia, Canada, Costa Rica, India and the United Kingdom, supporting users in 100+ countries. Learn more at www.blackbaud.com or follow us on [X/Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

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Forward-looking Statements

Except for historical information, all of the statements, expectations and assumptions contained in this news release are forward-looking statements that involve a number of risks and uncertainties, including statements regarding expected benefits of products and product features. Although Blackbaud attempts to be accurate in making these forward-looking statements, it is possible that future circumstances might differ from the assumptions on which such statements are based. In addition, other important factors that could cause results to differ materially include the following: general economic risks; uncertainty regarding increased business and renewals from existing customers; continued success in sales growth; management of integration of acquired companies and other risks associated with acquisitions; risks associated with successful implementation of multiple integrated software products; the ability to attract and retain key personnel; risks associated with management of growth; lengthy sales and implementation cycles; technological changes that make our products and services less competitive; and the other risk factors set forth from time to time in the SEC filings for Blackbaud, copies of which are available free of charge at the SEC's website at www.sec.gov or upon request from Blackbaud's investor relations department. All Blackbaud product names appearing herein are trademarks or registered trademarks of Blackbaud, Inc.

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