



Institute of Systems Wisdom

Fellows Newsletter

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January 12, 2024

Institute of Systems Wisdom is an innovative social-academic-practice community that emerged in 2013 (and published a [Newsletter](#) beginning in 2014) as a result of applied consulting and research projects hosted within the Organizational Dynamics MS and MPhil programs at the University of Pennsylvania (Penn). When project members (faculty, scholars, practitioners, and students) moved from Penn to the Thomas Jefferson University Doctor of Management in Strategic Leadership and Doctor of Philosophy in Complex Systems Leadership programs, a co-laboratory relationship between the Institute and Jefferson was established. When Jefferson closed both leadership doctorates in 2021 then the School of Continuing and Professional Studies in 2023, the community continued within the *Institute of Systems Wisdom* where many were *Fellows*. For information contact Larrymtarr@gmail.com (Editor) or visit: <https://www.systemswisdom.com/institute-systems-wisdom>.

Rise and Demise: A Brief History of the World's Only (and *Best*) Dual-Doctorates in Leadership

For a peer-reviewed paper describing the history of the two doctoral programs, see:

Starr, L.M. (2023). Rise and demise of the ideal doctoral program. *Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Academy of Management, Section 1857: Narrating Organizational Change: Future Stories and a Story of the Past*. Boston, MA, August 8, 2023. **Link to the pre-presentation version:** <https://jdc.jefferson.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1010&context=jscpsfp>

2013: December 2013, Dr. Matt Baker, Executive Dean of the College of Science, Health and Liberal Arts at Philadelphia University invited Dr. Larry Starr of University of Pennsylvania to design a novel doctoral program.

2014 – 2015: During Fall 2014 – Spring 2015, using Ackoff's Interactive Planning / Idealized Design methodology, more than 120 stakeholders designed a novel dual-doctorate leadership program: <https://systemswisdom.typepad.com/my-blog/>.

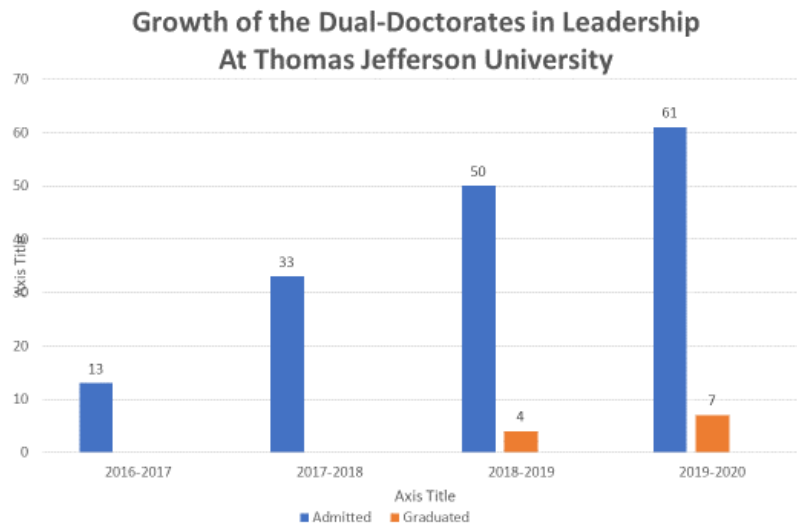
2015: April 2015, the primary degree, a Doctor of Management (DMgt) in Strategic Leadership (DSL) was approved by Philadelphia University faculty. In September 2015, the degree was approved and accredited by Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). The Strategic Leadership doctoral website was immediately opened and applications were accepted for Spring 2016 admission.

2016: January 2016, DSL Cohorts 1 (Spring) began, and in Fall 2016, Cohort 2 began.

2017: DSL Cohort 3 (Spring) and Cohort 4 (Fall) began. In May 2017, Thomas Jefferson University announced its merger with Philadelphia University.

2018: DSL Cohorts 5 (Spring) and Cohort 6 (Fall) began.

2019: DSL Cohort 7 (Spring) and Cohort 8 (Fall) began. In April 2019, Jefferson approved the second of the two previously designed programs, the PhD in Complex Systems Leadership (CSL). The website was opened and applications for admission for September (Fall) CSL Cohort 1 began.



2020: Spring 2020, the School of Continuing and Professional Studies announced that the DMgt and PhD programs were both immediately closed. DMgt and PhD students were given one year to move into dissertations or exit. One student (Guy Thigpen) was permitted to re-enter the DMgt after a leave from Cohort 1 to become the only member of Cohort 9.

2020-2022: Only previously scheduled core courses were offered. More than a dozen DSL students left because they did not have sufficient time to complete coursework. Of the CSL students, 3 remained and 5 were unable to finish due to lack of available courses. In Fall 2022, Jefferson announced as of January 1, 2023, the School of Continuing and Professional Studies would close with all remaining DSL and CSL faculty and students to be moved into the School of Business.

2023: Between January and December 2023, remaining students continued to write dissertations. As of December 2023, 44 had earned their doctorates.

2024: As of the start of the Spring 2024 semester, there are 4 remaining DSL students writing dissertations: Father Al Bradley, John Ervin, Guy Thigpen and Raul Virella. Please reach out to support your colleagues – the **“Final 4 in 24.”**

**Education, Research and Scholarship from the
Doctoral Programs of
Strategic Leadership
and
Complex Systems Leadership**

https://jdc.jefferson.edu/diss_masters/ Dissertations

<https://jdc.jefferson.edu/sb/> Faculty papers, student papers, posters

<https://jdc.jefferson.edu/sln/> All Jefferson newsletters

<https://www.systemswisdom.com/fellows-newsletters> Systems Wisdom newsletters

**Digital Video Projects and Resources from the
Doctoral Program in Strategic Leadership**

<https://philau.app.box.com/s/hhyl9hf1ir0hdxm7bxaubp3vde1qk7qw> Ana Reyes
Immersive Virtual Reality Course Video

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/5009586> Russell Ackoff US Navy Videos

<https://vimeo.com/148192220> Russell Ackoff Bell Telephone Video



Alumnus (noun): a former member of a group, company, or organization; often but not exclusively a graduate.

Traditionally, "alumnus" refers to a single male, while "alumni" is the plural of males as well as for male and female former members. However, some use "alumna" for a single female and "alumnae" for the plural term.

DMgt and PhD Alumni/Alumnae Community Updates

DSL Cohort 1



Michael Asada, DMgt

After being commissioned in 1976 as an Armor Officer upon graduation from the U.S. Military Academy; and following a distinguished career including rising to the rank of Colonel (ret); and having been Associate Professor at the U.S. Military Academy and later, Executive Officer to the Head of the Mechanical Engineering Department, Michael entered DSL in 2016 as founder/president of InVenture Associates, LLC, a consultancy he had established in Troy, MI.

Dr. Michael Asada is now Governor of the Eastern District Council of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL). JACL is the nation's oldest and largest Asian American/Pacific Islander civil rights organization. It's mission is to monitor and respond to issues that enhance or threaten the civil and human rights of all Americans and implements strategies to effect positive social change, particularly to the Asian Pacific American Community. The Eastern District Council represents the New England Chapter, New York Chapter, SEABROOK Chapter, Philadelphia Chapter, Washington D.C. Chapter and Southeast Chapter. [LinkedIn profile](#).



Michelle Capobianchi, DMgt

After earning a BS in biology and business, MS in Human Resource Development (HRD), and post-HRD Certificate from Villanova University, Michelle entered DSL in 2016 as a catering and sales manager for Villanova's food service division. In that role and as an active member of the National Association of College and University Food Service (NACUFS) she was a scholarship recipient for their Leadership Institute hosted by Nestle Corporation. She was also the recipient of the Villanova University Distinguished Service Award.

Having completed her dissertation on the complexities of Villanova University food service management, **Dr. Michelle Capobianchi** is now Villanova's Associate Director of Catering and Connelly Center Operations. After graduation, she wrote,

With everyone being so busy, I never took a moment to stop and tell you what an amazing job I think you've done with the program. The fact that I get to be forever-connected to it fills me with pride and humility. I appreciate all of your support in helping me achieve my dream of getting a Doctorate. More importantly, thank you for teaching me a new way of seeing and understanding the world. I will do my best to take what the program has given me and share it with others, hopefully changing a few minds along the way!





Derek Hunsberger, DMgt

Derek had been recruited by the University of Pennsylvania in 2002 to lead a newly created student program for Residential Services. He subsequently was promoted to the university's Business Services Division as the Sr. Associate Director for Building Operations a position to which he was named after winning (in 2014 and 2015) Penn's highest staff award, Models of Excellence. As he was retiring while finishing his dissertation, he wrote,

After 17 years, I am extremely proud of my career here at Penn, and I leave having completed our first new building in 50 years, and an \$80+ million renovation of a historical building. In addition, we are midway into building our second new building, which we've been designing for a few years. Finally, this week we just completed scope development for our biggest renovation ever, a (likely) \$300+ million renovation of The Quad, Penn's signature building which houses 1500 Freshman.

Having written his dissertation (not yet uploaded) *Redesigning Athlete Leadership* and earned his degree, **Dr. Derek Hunsberger** is actively engaged in a new career as a higher education teacher and learner. He is now Adjunct Professor at Salem Community College teaching Coaching and Sports Management; Adjunct Professor at Rowan University's School of Business teaching Organization Behavior and Business Policy; and Adjunct Professor at the University of Delaware School of Business teaching Operations Management. He has also reached out to Dean Phillip Russell in the Jefferson B-School to let him know he's available to help in any way with the Sports Management minor.



Adena Johnston, DMgt

When she entered the DMgt program, Adena was Vice President and Practice Leader of Talent Development at CCI Consulting. Like Derek she had earned an MS in Organizational Dynamics from Penn, but her focus had been in that program's newest concentration, Organizational Consulting and Executive Coaching (OCEC) which aligned with her professional work. That the OCEC concentration required writing and formally defending a Thesis/Capstone helped to prepare her for the Jefferson program: Indeed, her discipline and rigor enabled her to become the first person to deliver and defend a dissertation ([*Re-Envisioning Talent Management for the 4th Industrial Revolution: A Systems and Design Thinking Intervention*](#) in 2018) and to graduate from the Strategic Leadership Doctorate.

Dr. Adena Johnston is now Principal Owner/President of the consultancy, Lateral Group, a Division of Complete School Solutions, LLC. and an Adjunct Professor at Drexel University, Temple University, and Thomas Jefferson University. Her professional coaching experiences have led her to becoming a member of the [Forbes Coaches Council](#). Informed by her extensive learning, her consulting group offers Leadership & Team Development, Executive Coaching, Organizational Dynamics, and Systems & Interactive Design Thinking. [Lateral Group](#).





Robert (Bob) Schatz, DMgt

Bob Schatz is a 40+ year veteran in the field of enterprise software and systems development and leadership having held leadership positions at GE/Lockheed-Martin, Liquent, Primavera Systems, and Solstice Software. When he entered DSL, similar to his colleagues, Derek and Adena, he had earned his MS in Organizational Dynamics from Penn. He had created in 2006 and he was principal of the consultancy, Agile Infusion, a training/consulting practice that helps large enterprises successfully adopt lean/agile practices a significant organization change strategy. His doctoral dissertation, [*The Effects of Radical Transformational Change on the Change Agent in Software and Systems Product Development Contexts*](#) examined the “lived experiences of people who have led cutting-edge organizational changes, particularly the factors that trigger a “go” moment in leaders who initiate radical organizational change.”

Dr. Bob Schatz is a consummate learner-teacher not only for clients but within his family. While negotiating his own self-development within the Strategic Leadership program, he also supported and engaged with his son Derek while he earned his MBA from Jefferson’s Business School. Now, they work together in Agile Infusion as *Bob and Derek Schatz, father and son, with two different viewpoints*. For the 2023 Scrum Summit, Bob described himself as a “humorous, direct and pragmatic person” all of which is true. But, a better description comes from his peers including that as an educator with distinctive knowledge and understanding of lean/agile development techniques such as Scrum, XP, and Kanban, “Bob isn’t so much an individual as he is a turning point. Take his course(s) - and take it seriously - and you’ll find a newfound enthusiasm for your work you may well have been searching for.” [LinkedIn Profile](#).



Christine (Tina) Wiltsee, DMgt

In January 2016, as she began her first semester of DSL Cohort 1, Tina not only studied and met her course obligations, she started a company, *Advantage Supports*, to provide support coordination to adults with intellectual/ developmental disabilities (I/DD) through the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities. Starting a new business is not a trivial endeavor. Nor is starting a new Doctoral program. But Tina persevered and flourished so much so that she had to delay finishing her dissertation when her company expanded to the point where she had to balance her time and energy in its favor. Her passion can be appreciated in a podcast she delivered in 2018 via the [Arc of New Jersey Family Institute](#) which can be heard here: **[Download this Episode](#)**

Now, with her dissertation completed, degree earned and company well-established, **Dr. Tina Wiltsee** has become a serious and productive contributor as can be appreciated when she testified before the New Jersey State Legislature Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee in March 2023. She said:

Looking back, I am very proud of what we all have done and the significant improvements made in the lives of those we serve. Our services and those of others are part of a unique public-private partnership that has seen tremendous success. As we help people navigate these programs and find quality support services, I hear heartwarming stories every day about how people's lives have changed for the better. We do this work because we are compassionate and driven to improve the lives of those we serve.

[LinkedIn Profile.](#)



DSL Cohort 2



Darshi Mody, DMgt

Darshi Mody of Mumbai, India was the first international student to be admitted to DSL. As a design professional with little previous business education, she presented less “fit” compared to others who were applying. Yet, her motivation arguments led to admission:

I am really keen to pursue a doctorate in strategic leadership, as it will challenge me to go beyond what I have experienced and learned so far. I will expand my current horizons to further new developments. I assure you that I will be a hardworking and determined student throughout the program.

Her outcomes were realized: Consider her dissertation committee final report:

In my long experience in higher education, I have never seen quite such a transformation from when a student entered and completed doctoral studies. But the evidence of her dissertation, “[*Understanding Indian Interior Design Education: From the Indian Design Professionals' Perspective*](#),” demonstrates that Darshi was so comprehensively diligent that, although we had suggestions, she had already exceeded expectations. In our committee review, there was no discussion about whether she has passed, but only how remarkable had been her accomplishment.

With approximately 700 reviews/downloads of her dissertation, **Dr. Darshi Mody** is a Program Management Specialist for the non-profit, International Graduate Studies, Inc., where she provides academic and non-academic guidance structures to international graduates, and identifies and mitigates risks that can impact projects and fundraising activities. [LinkedIn Profile](#).



Eugene de Klerk, PhD, DMgt

When Eugéne de Klerk applied to the DMgt program, he was living in Pretoria, South Africa where he worked as a freelance consultant affiliated with Dominus In en Uitvoere (Pty) Ltd. and its associated organizations. He had previously earned a PhD in Management of Technology and Innovation from the Da Vinci Institute (Johannesburg, SA) where in 2009 the Ackoff Center for Design Thinking had been created. Eugéne's reasons for earning a second doctorate were to gain direct consulting/practice competencies as he outlined in his application letter:

Upon graduation, I will seek a position as a lead consultant within the strategy practice, of a large consulting firm. In three to five years, once I have become adept in consulting for large companies, I will move into a senior associate position where I will develop my abilities to anticipate client needs and to design solutions that address these needs.

As an international full-time student in DSL, Eugéne acquired an internship with SAP working and learning about their applications of AI, IoT, machine learning and analytics, and did consulting work with Systems Wisdom in applied systems thinking.

Dr. Eugéne de Klerk having defended his second doctoral dissertation ([*Metamodern Strategy: A System of Multi-ontological Sense Making*](#)) is now Senior Solution Specialist, IBU Aerospace & Defense at SAP. As a [*Featured Speaker*](#) for a 2022 conference held by SAP, he was described: "Eugéne's experience in aerospace, technology, innovation, and strategy helps clients to collaborate on innovation and strategy topics in the aerospace and defense industry to solve complex business challenges." [*LinkedIn Profile*](#).



James (Jim) Plummer, DMgt

Jim entered the workforce immediately after high school spending nearly three decades working in a variety of (mostly) health-related roles including Medical Corpsman, then as administrator/manager in the US Postal Service, Homeland Security, American Red Cross, Quest Diagnostics, Penn Medicine, Main Line Health and Crozer-Keystone Health. In 2007, he decided to gain formal education credentials by earning his undergraduate BA degree in business communication. He followed this with multiple Master degrees then the Jefferson Strategic Leadership doctorate. In his application essay he wrote,

I have a vision for myself that displays me not “sedentary at the table” but as participating in the decisions being made. I want to mentor and teach students who have the same thirst for knowledge as I have. To reach this vision, I need to be exposed to the various technologies and methodologies that this program offers.

After completing his dissertation, ***Current Practices, Perceptions and Challenges of Telehealth in the Treatment of Mental Health in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs*** and re-evaluating his professional interests, **Dr. Jim Plummer** is now responsible for critical decision as the Administrator of the Delaware County (PA) Health Department, ***Division of Population Health***, the mission of which “to build healthy and thriving communities. Health, after all, is the foundation for a thriving community.” He is also a mentor and teacher as Adjunct Professor in the College of Graduate and Professional Studies at Rosemont College and as Adjunct Professor in the College of Business & Leadership at Eastern University. He is also Senior Healthcare Consultant for Aura Medical Consultancy. [LinkedIn Profile](#).



William Myles, DMgt

Growing up in public housing in Meridian Mississippi and being provided an opportunity to participate in Boys and Girls Club as an alternative to the “street,” William learned to impact his community through the arts by establishing the largest youth choir in the city of Meridian. From this early leadership activity, his remarkable educational and professional career developed. He earned his BS then MBA while Director of Community and Supportive Services at the Meridian Housing Authority, then as Executive Vice President of Community Operations and Resident Development at the Philadelphia Housing Authority, he applied to and was admitted to the Jefferson DMgt program.

In the midst of writing his dissertation, William accepted the role of Chief Executive Officer of the Albany, Georgia Housing Authority, the first Black leader in the 70-year history of the agency. One central strategy has been to set a transformation by partnering with HUD’s Rental Assistance Demonstration program to change “the face of traditional public housing in much-needed \$30 million transformation and renovation.”

Dr. William Myles’ dissertation (not yet uploaded), “*Transitioning Residents out of Public Housing,*” an ethnographic research methodology informed in part by his family experiences, was so well received by his committee that the Dean of Jefferson’s Business School urged him to relate his personal and professional experiences to the Jefferson PR group for a (to be published) story.

DSL Cohort 3



Reverend Valerie Andrews, DMgt

In Fall 2016, an application package was pushed under the Program Office closed door. It described that Rev. Valerie Andrews was Business Manager of a Philadelphia Baptist church and an Adaptive Challenge Consultant for the Philadelphia Baptist Association. “Now is the time,” she wrote in her application essay, “to earn a doctorate and to find a pathway forward to make significant contributions to the Baptist Church system.”

Val has been an adaptive learner and educator for most of her life. Graduating from William Penn High School as Class Salutatorian (2nd highest ranked student) and holding two Master degrees (in Counseling Education and in Divinity), she accepted a position in 2019 at Missio Seminary, an accredited (by MSCHE and the Association of Theological Schools) degree-granting institution. As Director of the Program for Urban Leaders and Pastors in Transition (PULPIT), her role was to “equip pastors in the Philadelphia metro region with effective strategies to thrive personally and professionally through expert teaching/training, small group learning, large group retreats, multi-generational cohort-based peer groups, and individual activities.”

Appreciating that the impact of COVID had interrupted the most rewarding part of ministry, i.e., helping people by offering spiritual direction, and had increased and coproduced increased “compassion fatigue,” **Rev. Dr. Valerie Andrews** focused her dissertation on how to help. The results were “[*Designing a Program to Help Urban Pastors Cope with Compassion Stress*](#)” which described a program designed by stakeholders to help clergy effectively cope with and manage the contextual challenges of ministry that can lead to distress responses. LinkedIn Profile. [LinkedIn Profile](#). [Missio Seminary](#).



Reverend Paula Smith-Benson, DMgt

Born in Kingston, Jamaica and immigrating with her family to the United States, Reverend and Pastor, Registered Nurse and Midwife, Major (Retired) in the US Air Force, Flight Commander, Family Advocacy Nurse and Troop Commander in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Paula Anne Smith-Benson entered the DMgt program in Spring 2017.

As a certified trauma recovery coach (CTRC), the International Association of Trauma Recovery Coaches describes her as, “specializing in working with survivors of sexual trauma, with a focus on Military Sexual Trauma (MST). As a survivor of sexual trauma and MST, Paula brings empathy and a strength-based approach to her work.” Indeed, helping others to navigate the MST experience has been her professional focus as evidenced by her [You Tube videos](#), scholarly papers including publication in the [Journal of General Internal Medicine](#), [Rotary Club presentations](#), and [PBS television interviews](#). Her 2021 doctoral dissertation, “[A Systems Thinking Approach to Formulating the Problem of Military Sexual Trauma among Black Female Veterans](#)” which reflected both scholarship and her personal experiences has approximately 900 downloads from Jefferson Digital Commons.

Integrating her many educational and lifelong learned proficiencies, **Rev. Dr. Paula Smith-Benson** is a peer specialist at the Maryland Opioid Operational Command Center in Baltimore where she is trying to help end the opioid crisis in the state and change the shame surrounding people suffering from addiction. “There is a lot of stigma around mental health challenges, but even more stigma around substance misuse disorders,” she said in a recent [interview with Ch 2 ABC News Baltimore](#).



Michael Molta, DMgt

Growing up and residing in Syracuse, NY, Mike's first six years of professional work was as a (Lincoln) car salesman. Years later as a Senior Program Coordinator in Executive Education at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania where he then earned his MS in Organizational Dynamics, he set his education sights on the Jefferson DMgt program. For his application essay he wrote, "As an organizational development professional, I have come to understand the importance of continuing education and keeping an open mind. I believe that this program provides the perfect opportunity to practice what I preach while broadening my experience and knowledge of strategic leadership from multiple perspectives." To these ends, while a doctoral student, Mike worked as a Learning and Development Specialist in Thomas Jefferson University's Department of Learning and as Director of Organizational Strategy at Northwestern Mutual Insurance.

Having completed his dissertation, [*Assessing the Patient Experience Evaluation Methodology: A Review of the HCAHPS Survey and Related Processes*](#), and degree, **Dr. Michael Molta** is Organizational Design and Workforce Planning Specialist at Wawa's corporate headquarters in Wawa, PA where he leads the workforce planning strategy development and serves as a Subject Matter Expert for all organizational design initiatives. [LinkedIn Profile](#).





Teresa Wolfgang, DMgt

Teresa has had nearly 3 full decades of experience leading and directing in the military, private, and public sectors through domestic and international change management, as well as strategic, operational and tactical planning. She began her professional career as an active duty Army officer and achieved the rank of Colonel (Retired). Her assignments included Desert Shield/Desert Storm/Egypt/Korea, Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan), Kuwait; Africa, Middle East, and Central Asia.

When admitted to DSL Teresa was a management consultant (Enterprise Senior Technology Advisor) at Axiologic Solutions which provides strategic and professional services for US government agencies. Her dissertation, *Identity, Transition, And High-Performing Veterans*, a reflection of her experiences and passions to help others, was an “exploration of veteran identity and how it plays an important role in veterans successfully transitioning to mainstream society and navigating to the US job market.” Working with the Union League of Philadelphia Veteran’s Fellowship Program, she led the initiative which resulted in development and sustaining a program for high-potential veterans that blends “professional guidance, networking, and workshops to enhance the success of veterans and create lasting connections within our community.”

Dr. Teresa Wolfgang is now Vice President of Defense Intelligence Programs at BCT LLC a Women-Owned Small Business (WOSB), that provides services and End-to-End Solutions supporting the US Department of Defense (DOD) and Intelligence Communities. [LinkedIn Profile](#).





Travis Douglas, DMgt

When he applied to DSL, Travis was Assistant Vice President for Residential Learning and Inclusion Programs at Rowan University where he was Chief Housing Officer of the 5,347-bed auxiliary housing portfolio and oversaw the Office of Social Justice, Inclusion and Conflict Resolution, which Travis helped to create in 2015. With a long-time commitment to student housing (his first listed job was Resident Director, UC Santa Barbara), one of those who recommended him for admission to Jefferson wrote,

Travis' intellectual ability to go beyond normal organizational obligations is particularly demonstrated in his ability to organize process. This competency adds to securing an environment conducive to learning, an environment that is inclusive for all students, and yields high satisfaction from the students he serves. I might also add as an employee he keeps me involved, has excellent follow through and follows directives with the "right" amount of resistance (LOL).

Winner of the first annual (2018) competitive Research Fellowship from the Jefferson Arlen Specter Center for his project, "[*Efficacy of Clery Act Timely Warning and Emergency Notification Messages*](#)" which he subsequently expanded to become the basis of his dissertation with the same title, **Dr. Travis Douglas** is now Executive Director of Housing and Residential Education, California State University, San Marcos, a highly ranked academic institution with approximately 16,000 students. CSUSM's Master Plan describes intentions to grow to an enrollment of 25,000 an outcome likely to benefit from Travis' strategic leadership proficiencies. [LinkedIn Profile](#).



DSL Cohort 4



Syed Kazmi, DMgt

Syed was the youngest person admitted to DSL which resulted in part because he literally chased me around the East Falls campus until I relented to review his application. A top MBA student and academic award-winner, he petitioned to be considered an *emergent strategic leader*. At the time of his admission he was a manager at GCF Insurance mostly focused on marketing and evaluating marketing campaigns. As a doctoral student, Syed maintained his analytic interests then began to integrate systems thinking which led to creation of the consultancy, 14K Business Solutions (with his wife). He also maintained his research interests by working with Finance Professor D. K. Malhotra of the Jefferson Business School to co-author and have published a series of academic papers from which he expanded his thinking and approach to inform his dissertation, "[*Evaluating the Performance of Sector Mutual Funds.*](#)"

Dr. Syed Ahmed Raza Kazmi remains principal and co-founder of 14K Business Solutions and is also Visiting Assistant Professor of Management and Marketing at Manhattan College, Riverdale, NY where he teaches in the [O'Malley School of Business](#). The College and Business School offer programs that "integrate a broad liberal education with concentration in specific disciplines in the arts and sciences or with professional preparation in business, education and engineering;" ideal for a Jefferson Strategic Leadership graduate. [LinkedIn Profile](#).





Rume (Joy) Azikiwe-Oyeyemi, DMgt

A career Human Resources professional and educator, in 2019 Joy was named *Delaware Valley HR Person of the Year*; in 2021, *Top Women Leaders of New Jersey*; and in 2023, she was inducted as a board member of *Tri-State Human Resources Management Association (HRMA)*. When admitted to DSL, she was Associate Director of Staff and Labor at University of Pennsylvania and was subsequently promoted to be Penn’s Executive Director of HR and Chief of Staff. She also held Adjunct Faculty positions in the Business Schools at Wilmington University and Rowan University. In her application letter to DSL, Joy wrote,

I come from a family of givers; the spirit of giving, interest in humanities and leading seems to be in our bloodline. I aspire to be a Vice President or Chief Human Resources Office for an organization and earning the Strategic Leadership Doctorate will aid me to do this.

Having completed her dissertation, [*Faculty Management: An Examination of the Dual Role of Faculty as Managers in Higher Education*](#) and earned her degree, **Dr. Joy Azikiwe-Oyeyemi** is now Chief HR Officer & Senior Vice President at City Year and Adjunct Professor, Rowen University and Wilmington University. City Year “partners with public schools in 29 communities across the U.S. and through international affiliates in the U.K. and South Africa to provide support to students, classrooms and the whole school to improve on social, emotional and academic skills— skills that help students thrive in school and contribute to their community.” [LinkedIn Profile](#).

In Memoriam



David Williams, EdD, DMgt

David Williams was admitted to DSL as a member of Cohort 4, the largest entry group. He had an extraordinary educational career and carried out important professional work that benefited from his deep caring and experiences. An exceptionally private and humble learner, David's academic credentials for entry included a Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA), Bachelor of Arts (BA) Cum Laude in History, Master of Business Administration (MBA), Master of Science (MS) in Taxation, Master of Arts (MA) in Counseling Psychology, and Doctor of Education (EdD) for which his dissertation was titled, "*Utilization of Trust in the Financial Planning Process.*"

David's interest in financial planning was reflected in his 4 decades of service (and his repeat awards as *Employee of the Month*) to the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency where he was Guarantor Representative. This meant he helped individuals, families (and loan operations staff) with education and processes about financial support to manage the cost of education for residents of the State of Pennsylvania.

Dr. David Williams passed in August 2021 shortly after completing his degree and the upload of his dissertation, "[*A Systems Approach to Student Loan Default.*](#)"



Odell Jones, DMgt

Gulf War veteran (with the 312th Evacuation Hospital in Saudi Arabia); US Army Reserve State Hospital/120th ARCOM Non-Commissioned *Officer of the Year*; and first in his family to attend college (and to earn 2 master degrees), Odell wrote in his application essay, “When I have made a decision about something, I am very driven and passionate about taking the journey and completing my goal no matter how many bumps I hit along the way.”

When admitted to DSL, Odell was Associate Director for Husbandry Operations in the University of Pennsylvania Laboratory Animal Resources Group where he was responsible for administration of operations of 12 complex animal research facilities and leadership for a diverse staff of 150 research technicians, managers and supervisors. In addition to meeting his obligations in this administrative role, he also co-authored nearly 3 dozen academic papers many of which were [published while a DSL student](#).

Informed by his leadership role in the Penn Professional Staff Assembly (PPSA) as well as his experiences in his own department, **Dr. Odell Jones** wrote his dissertation on the challenges of [Understanding and Application of Systems Thinking to Diversity Challenges at Higher Education Institutions](#). His research revealed that “DEI leaders relied on conventional linear formulations and problem solving because they did not know how to think in systems or use methods and tools derived from this mode of thinking,” the implications of which were that they lacked proficiencies to solve complex DEI problems. His committee which included the highest ranked HR officer at Penn agreed.



Hamid Berthal, DMgt

Hamid has been an employee of the City of Philadelphia's Office of Human Resources where he is responsible for developing, administering and evaluating tests/assessments and eligibility for civil service positions. But his civil service activities only reflect part of his life experiences. Born in Casablanca, Morocco and where he earned a BS in Engineering, he moved to the Philadelphia area then earned an MBA in which he completed sub-programs in IT, Finance, and Human Resources Management. When admitted to DSL, he focused on learning how to teach leadership to others. This resulted in his outreach to universities in Casablanca asking if he might be given the opportunity to deliver lectures based on what he was learning in his doctoral studies. As described in [Program Newsletter Volume 5, Number 2, p. 9](#), *Institut Supérieur de Commerce et d'Administration des Entreprises* (ISCAE), a business school, and *University Hassan II* a liberal arts university accepted his offer. He wrote,

This experience has allowed me to think about and explore more teaching opportunities, to learn more about leadership and complexity, and to connect with many people. By presenting these workshops, I not only increased my understanding of leadership but also made professional academic connections – broadened my network - with those who may help me to find other teaching opportunities.

Having defended his dissertation [Applying a Systems-Thinking Approach to Developing Resiliency in Muslim Nonprofit Organizations](#) and earned his doctorate, **Dr. Hamid Bertal** remains in the Office of Human Resources but he is also engaged in many local projects to bring leadership learning to communities of children and adults across the City of Philadelphia.



Robyn Chin, DMgt

In Robyn’s application essay, she described her professional financial and accounting work and her earned MBA and CPA to support her passion for working in real estate. She repeatedly noted her interests, capabilities and assumptions that successful organizational performance came from well-structured information. She wrote: “I believe that the important skills needed are the ability to understand problems and to be able to think through – solving them – in a specific and analytical way.”

Then she entered DSL, was immersed in systems and design thinking, and added to these long-held beliefs, a new way of thinking. The results? Appreciating that the divergent views and system-influences of stakeholders were also critical to organizational performance, her dissertation concerned the approach of Peter Checkland: [*Soft System Methodology Applied to Stakeholder Engagement in Social Services Nonprofit Organizations*](#).

Dr. Robyn Chin is now Vice President of Accounting and Finance for Avertix Medical, described as providing the “first and only FDA-approved implantable cardiac surveillance system designed to detect and warn patients of acute thrombotic coronary occlusion.” [LinkedIn Profile](#).





Pamela Tull, DMgt

Pamela entered the Strategic Leadership doctorate as Supervisory Program Analyst at the US Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) which manages the global supply chain – from raw materials to end user to disposition – for the entire US military system, and more. But, her deeper interests concerned working with and helping *people*. She wrote in her application essay,

I was accepted in the Federal Internal Coaching Training Program. Obtaining my doctorate coupled with this will assist me with my goal of providing dedicated service to people and organizations by using coaching techniques to help them realize they can find solutions to personal and professional problems from within themselves.

To study and learn more about coaching processes, she deeply studied the methodology of interactive planning and identified the facilitator skill sets needed for improved idealized design engagement. Upon completion of her dissertation, [*Interactive Planning: An Applied Systems Thinking Approach from the Perspective of a Participant-Observer*](#), **Dr. Pamela Tull** retired after 23 years from DLA and is now a principal (with her husband, Dr. Robert Tull) of CoachingSolutions180 LLC which provides leadership development, executive and life systemic/whole-person coaching and mentoring to individuals, groups, and small to medium-sized companies. [LinkedIn Profile](#). [CoachingSolutions180 Consultancy](#).





Paul Raison, Jr., DMgt

Paul's application to DSL presented his organizational writing and thinking strengths: his essay was formatted with Table of Contents, 5 pages describing his "journey of reasons, motivations and goals," and concluded with References. He also demonstrated his accomplished backward thinking such that when he completed the doctoral program, he wrote, it would "repeat prior successes but would be a new chapter." Paul entered as a Tax Advisor and Manager for powerhouse H&R Block. His credentials included multiple degrees and certifications associated with being a "Master" of this domain including Investment Advisor and Certified Financial Planner. His dissertation, supervised by Dr. Jean-Marc Choukroun, concerned procedures to generate an innovative business model, [*Innovative, Social Organic - Alternative Business Model.*](#)

Paul Thomas Raison Jr., D. Mgt., iMBA, MST, CFP®, ChFC®, EA is Master Tax Advisor and Manager. He uses his extensive knowledge and skills in federal, state, and city tax advising, compliance, and planning, and serves as a media spokesman and instructor for H & R Block, one of the largest tax preparation companies in the world. [LinkedIn Profile.](#)



DSL Cohort 5



Amna Al-Alawi, DMgt

Amna Al-Alawi entered DSL as a Digital Marketing & Communications Professional from the Kingdom of Bahrain in the Persian Gulf working as a Communications Advisor, Editor and Translator for several organizations in the MENA region. Prior to her full-time doctoral studies Amna worked for PineBridge Investments' Middle East office, a global asset manager, headquartered in New York, and as an Independent Consultant to Oman Oil Company, based in Muscat, Oman, where she advised on a national communications strategy for an international scholarship program under Oman Oil's CSR initiatives.

As a doctoral student, Amna gravitated toward Dr. Les Sztandera with whom she had studied as an MBA student and who became her co-author for a (2019) best paper award at the [Artificial Intelligence in Global Health Data Analytics Conference in Porto, Portugal](#), *Leveraging Statistical Methods for an Analysis of Demographic Factors of Opioid Overdose Deaths*, and her dissertation advisor. Deeply interested in international health applications, for her dissertation she wrote, [A Systematic Approach to Big Data Analysis in Cataract Patients In Telangana State, India](#) with external readers Steven Herrine, MD and Richard Derman, MD from Jefferson's Sidney Kimmel Medical College.

Dr. Amna Al-Alawi returned to the Kingdom of Bahrain after graduation, but has not updated her online profiles to describe her current professional role. [LinkedIn Profile](#).



Xuejuan (Joyce) Zhang, DMgt

Born and growing up in the People’s Republic of China where she earned a law degree from Jilin University, then moving to the US where she earned two Master degrees (from Carnegie Mellon and Penn), and with extensive international business experience, Joyce was admitted to DSL holding the position of Managing Partner of T.H.E. Capital LLC, a Beijing-based consultancy that provided Private Equity/Venture Capital and Merger/Acquisition consulting within the US and in China. In her application, she noted,

This is the right program for me to accomplish my objectives of enriching my understanding of complexity, learning and experiencing theories and practices for making strategic changes and developing myself as an effective leader and entrepreneur. What attracts me most to the program is the teaching-learning approach that integrates theories with the knowledge and experiences of my peers.

Focusing on the complex systems challenges of modern healthcare, **Dr. Joyce Zhang** is now Executive Director at Everest Medical Group which runs multiple healthcare centers staffed with bilingual healthcare providers and patient care coordinators for the benefit of their multi-cultural patient population. Her dissertation, in alignment with her professional career and an extension of her previous scholarship including [*Healthcare Regulation and Governance: Big Data Analytics and Healthcare Data Protection*](#), concerned [*An Analytic and Systemic View of the Digital Transformation of Healthcare*](#) in which she elucidated how “the interconnectedness of subsystems and stakeholders in systems thinking can be combined with digital twin technology (i.e., the physical and digital realms of Industry 4.0) to investigate the dynamic interactions among key stakeholders, leading to the development of new regulatory policies.” [LinkedIn Profile](#).



Anne McCafferty, DMgt

With over 25 years of Human Resources and Operations experience in the US, Mexico and UK leading the talent for large (150,000 associates) and small private companies, Anne came to DSL seeking to refocus her professional activities. Having won in 2015 the National Diversity Council's prestigious award, "Most Powerful and Influential Woman in Pennsylvania" for her work and experience driving change in diversity and inclusion in the work place, she decided to center her inquiry and self-development on this broad area of HR, particularly the role of professional executive coaching. In her application, she wrote,

In my previous experiences of what worked or was a challenge, I did not have technical integration tools or formal project management training to be as effective as I would have liked. I believe having the formal education and formal consulting skills from the Doctor of Management program would lend to my credibility and ease of working through such crucial high-level strategies.

Her dissertation, [*How May Executive Coaches Advance Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Organizations?*](#) concluded that (a) increased interest in DEI must be coupled with implementation, (b) focus on building relationships and personalizing trainings, (c) integrate DEI with both established values and the business plan going forward, (d) provide support to People of Color, and (e) DEI training requires an outside perspective.

Dr. Anne McCafferty is now Head of HR for Hale Trailer Brake & Wheel, the largest independent trailer dealership in North America with 14 Branches across the US and growing. She is also a member of the [Forbes HR Council](#) the invitation-only community of respected leaders "selected for the council based on the depth and diversity of experience as leaders in the human resources field." [LinkedIn Profile](#).



DSL Cohort 6



Andrew Braverman, DMgt

When Andrew applied to DSL, his professional work was Director, Worldwide Solutions Architecture for Micron Technology for which he was an “accomplished presales/systems engineering executive.” He wrote that he wanted to expand his horizons as a means to “encourage his own neuroplasticity, developing new experiences and skills through learning and collaboration along the way.” His recently completed business Master program from Rutgers had *not been a significant challenge*, he said. More valuable than the degree “was that each person – professors and classmates – had something to teach me.”

Andrew found his challenges in the high-quality faculty, coursework, projects and peers of the Jefferson doctoral program. He became particularly engaged in systems and design thinking (not previously addressed in his education) contributing to a series of applied projects and papers including “[Hospital Readmissions: Mess Formulation](#)” and “[What can AI do for you?](#)” His dissertation, [Redesigning the Information Technology Infrastructure Sales Engineering Process](#), described the gap between the execution of sales engineering and the ideal impact of presales systems for customers and vendors, a problem which he formulated as a “complex system which demands a systems thinking approach to understand the present state and to design an ideal future state.”

Dr. Andrew Braverman is now Area Vice President of Enterprise Systems Engineering at Pure Storage for which he is a “strategic sales and presales executive and *systems thinker*” leading a team of presales professionals across the Americas. [LinkedIn Profile](#).



Michael Jones, DMgt

When Mike applied for admission to DSL, he was Associate Director of the Thomas Jefferson University Research Administration Center of Excellence (RACE). His role was to manage and train other research administrators focusing on the portfolios of Neurosciences and the College of Health Professions, activities that required financial analyses, grant/business processes, and operational management. In his application essay he wrote,

Systems and business practices are rapidly changing including at Jefferson. It is important to me to build the necessary skills to be able to respond to change and to make the ethical decisions associated with these changes in our competitive and challenging environment. My long-term goals are to mesh my experience with the doctoral courses to help me prepare for a successful career after the program.

Influenced by the profound changes required during the global pandemic, his dissertation, [*Designing a Digital Employee Experience for Research Administration Using a Sequential Mixed-Methods Approach*](#), also presented at the Annual International Meeting of the [Society of Research Administrators](#) revealed the challenges of maintaining a team culture following the shift from fully in-person to remote and hybrid contexts, and recommended that “leadership should invest in Digital Employee Experience tools and practices as we enter this new research administration world.”

Dr. Michael Jones is now Administrative Director of Mitochondrial Medicine at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. [LinkedIn Profile](#).





Sagar Sharma, DMgt

When an applicant to DSL, Sagar was working at Johnson & Johnson as a Program Management Consultant in the Global Clinical Operations group a role that involved “harmonizing the clinical trial processes to gain productivity and reduce overall clinical trial cycle time” an important sequence in new drug-development. Prior to J&J, he worked at NBC Universal managing a broad portfolio of projects in “broadcast and digital media operations.” His personal statement concerned professional capabilities as follows:

My goal is to pursue a career to systematize the process of complex management and help organizations attain their full potential by achieving quicker execution of strategy, increase profit margins, and advance value propositions.

His doctoral dissertation [*A Systemic Model To Augment Consulting Competencies For Success In a Remote And Multicultural Work Environment*](#) produced a “core competency framework for consultants and consulting organizations to maximize their consultants’ competencies to sustain their consulting brand and provide remote business continuity to their valuable clients.” **Dr. Sagar Sharma** is now Senior Systems Engineer for Dell Technologies.

Then a twist emerged ... he entered *public service*: “Hi! I am Sagar Sharma and I ran for and was elected to be Director of the School Board in the Spring-Ford Area School District. Through my zeal and passion, I have achieved a doctorate in management that has helped me grow in my career. I bring my knowledge and enthusiasm to the Spring-Ford School Board to help students have a great foundation needed for prosperous careers and growth in their lives.” [LinkedIn Profile](#).



Jerin Juby, DMgt

Jerin's application listed his job as Operations Manager, Pulmonary Care, Thomas Jefferson University Hospitals. He was also Adjunct Faculty and winner of the Outstanding Alumni Award in the School of Continuing and Professional Studies. In his essays, he wrote.

It has been my long-term dream to do doctoral studies (because) I value education as the core the transformation of humanity (and the) potential to transform organizations, communities, and cultures. I hope to be an integral part of my organization to lead and to transform. I hope to strengthen my understanding and sharpen my skills as a leader. DSL I assume can provide me these essential skills.

Jerin's career continues to reflect his navigation and attainment of these goals and hopes as he has evolved from Manager to Director of Jefferson Respiratory Care, to Professor of Respiratory Therapy. His dissertation which focused on the complexity of talent management in his professional domain, [*Respiratory Therapy Staff Retention: A Systems Thinking Approach*](#), subsequently presented at the [2023 American Association of Respiratory Therapist Congress](#), was intentional research to help his hospital and the healthcare system of which it is a part.

Dr. Jerin Juby continues to make contributions to the Jefferson system but now as [Assistant Professor and Director](#) of the Bachelor of Science in Respiratory Therapy Program in the Jefferson College of Health Professions, a distinctive educational community run in collaboration with the [National Jewish Health's Korman Respiratory Institute](#) in Denver, CO. [LinkedIn Profile](#).



DSL Cohort 7



Myles Bassell, DMgt

Myles was singularly motivated to complete the DSL program. He explained, “I am a lecturer and Deputy-Chairperson for the faculty senate at City University of New York (CUNY), and I need to complete my academic credentials because the School of Business, Brooklyn College is seeking to earn AACBS accreditation and to do this full-time faculty such as I must hold a doctorate.” Despite living and working in Brooklyn, Myles found the determination and discipline to complete the required in-person curriculum AND several PhD in Complex Systems Leadership courses in *record time*. AND while accomplishing these he continued to teach and do research at Brooklyn College/CUNY.

His dissertation, *Transition to Online Education Requires Effective Leadership and Marketing: The Perceptions of Learners Concerning Online Courses* (not yet uploaded to the Jefferson Digital Commons), reflected his interests in digital learning and the needs of his institution for high quality programs. The goal of his research was to “inform the decisions of academic leaders responsible for transforming curricula, implementing best practices in online education, and developing marketing plans for higher education degree programs.”

Dr. Myles Bassell remains at the AACSB-Accredited Koppelman School of Business of [Brooklyn College](#), City University of New York, where in 2022 while finishing his dissertation, he earned the School of Business Service Excellence Award, and now continues to meet and surpass the personal and professional interests and needs of his colleagues and students. [LinkedIn Profile](#).



Jarrod Combs-Harris, DMgt

When admitted to DSL, Jay was an accomplished Senior Manager of consulting services at Genpact in New York where as a subject matter expert he was responsible for accounting and financial functions including financial transformations and reporting practices. His application essays noted,

I have an insatiable desire to achieve the highest standards for my career. For the past 20 years, I have worked incredibly hard to reach a level of excellence. By completing the Doctor of Management, I would be able to put the degree to practical use in my professional endeavors. In addition, I would love to have the opportunity to teach future leaders the skills that I have learned to continue the cycle of positive development of our children.

Under supervision of Dr. Rosa Colon-Kolacko, a renowned diversity thought leader and practitioner, Jay's dissertation, *[An Inclusive Leadership Model to Integrate Organizational Dynamics, Change Management, Change Leadership, and Diversity and Inclusion Needs for the Successful Implementation of Business Transformations](#)* explored how change management and Change Leadership theories and diversity and inclusion drivers play a significant role in how businesses can sustain successful transformations."

Dr. Jarrod Combs-Harris is now Inclusion and Diversity Lead for the Northeast Market Unit and North America Strategy & Consulting teams for Accenture. In addition to his already significant academic credentials, he is also pursuing his PhD in Human Resources Management. [LinkedIn Profile](#).

DSL Cohort 8



Reverend Sung Won Paek, DMgt

Sung Won's application was distinctive and compelling. He wrote,

I work closely with the immigrant populations of Korea, Vietnam, India and China as a Cultural Development Specialist in the Einstein Healthcare Network, and I support community development as a board member of the Family Services of Montgomery County. As a leader, I will strive to take what I have learned from my ancestors and their traditional teachings, and combine it with Western views of management, and apply strategic leadership through Jefferson's doctoral program.

Sung Won began his efforts of integrating Asian concepts of systems and complexity by writing [*Systems View of Coronavirus*](#). He then formalized and expanded his applications in his dissertation, [*Ideal Design for Emergence of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Community Health Engagement Using Systems Thinking*](#), in which he applied systems thinking "to understand these complex issues, and design thinking to generate an ideal concept for the emergence and sustainability of diversity, equity, inclusion, and community health engagement for the Philadelphia Korean community as a model for multicultural society in the greater Philadelphia region."

Rev. Dr. Sung Won Paek is now Head of Pastoral Care for the Grand View Health System, a partner with Penn and CHOP; President of the Philadelphia Chapter of *Hung Sa Dahn* (Young Korean Leadership Academy); and co-founder and Vice President of Systems Wisdom Korea Ltd (Seoul). [LinkedIn Profile](#).





Bibi Khan, DMgt

Born in Guyana, US Peace Corp Manager in Nairobi, Kenya, teaching fellow and earned MS degree in International Development Policy from Duke University, Bibi was Underwriting Consulting Director for Life Sciences (underwriting, marketing and servicing) at CNA Insurance when she applied to the DSL program. She wrote,

After a 40-year career, I have learned that behind the strategy are people who have personalities, emotions and their own story. I therefore make a conscious effort to be present when leading. My goals are to explore new ideas and promote a more conscious work environment. I believe the DMgt program will provide me with the tools and resources that will elevate my leadership skills.

In her dissertation, [*System View of the Talent Gap in the Commercial Property and Casualty Insurance Sector: A Pre-Mortem*](#), she reviewed the abundant evidence that the property and casualty (P&C) insurance industry faces a looming talent crisis. Although industry leaders are aware of the problem, they are unsure how to resolve or dissolve it strategically, and yet, if nothing new is done, the current business model is unlikely to be sustainable. Of course, she made recommendations for industry leaders and future researchers.

Dr. Bibi Khan is now Vice President of Underwriting for AmTrust Financial Services, a niche global specialty P&C insurance company. [LinkedIn Profile](#).



Carol Haines, DMgt

Carol first asked to discuss the program in the Edison Building in Center City where Strategic Leadership/Complex Systems Leadership had an office and because it was easy access from her office as Jefferson's VP of Clinical Transformation & Enterprise Care Coordination. An integral leadership team member, Carol's role involved identification and creation of clinical transformation programs across the Jefferson Health System. And to this end, she described her three goals for applying to DSL:

... "to utilize leadership, analytic, clinical and project management skills to effect high quality and efficient optimization (of services) in a challenging and supportive healthcare business environment." Second, "to develop a stronger leadership style, critically consider strategies and better manage complex projects" ... and third, "to finally achieve my goal of obtaining a floppy hat."

Her dissertation, [*Food Insecurity in the Working Poor*](#), described her research with the many stakeholders, e.g., employers, care providers, insurance companies and the government, who interact to co-produce the complicated challenges of being unable to obtain enough healthy food by working poor individuals and families. By research and extensive interviewing of stakeholders, she examined the potential of issuing Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)-like credit cards, a novel approach. Her results revealed positive reception, some implementation barriers to manage, and a broader understanding of the stakeholders involved.

Dr. Carol Haines, proud member of the international society of floppy hats, is now Chief Operating Officer of United Clinical Services for UnitedHealthcare where she "focuses on improving quality and the patient experience while creating efficient workflows and decreasing costs, and where she leads the outpatient RN Care Coordinators and Health Coaches to improve patients' overall health at attributed PCP practices." [LinkedIn Profile](#).



Regina Tendayi, DMgt

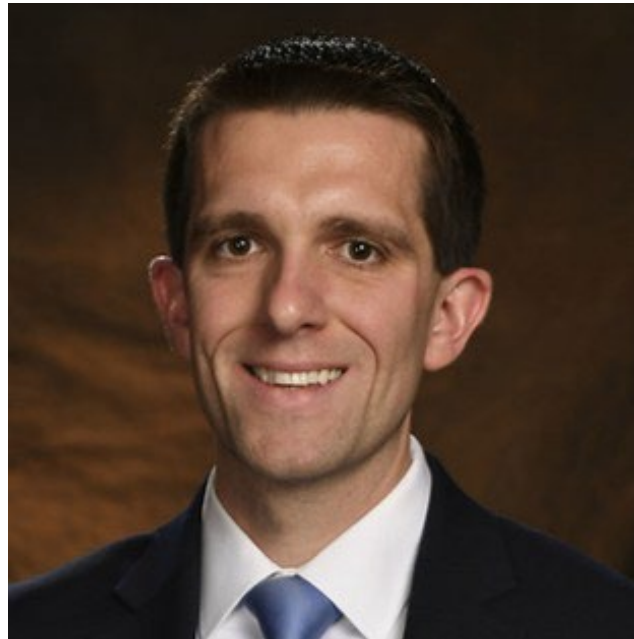
An internationally certified and educated senior professional of human resources (HR), talent and organization development, and former head of HR for Zimbabwe’s largest healthcare funder and service provider, Regina described her two central motivations. First, she wrote, “my passion has always been in people development, coaching and mentoring.” Second, “I am excited to be part of a revolution of corporate talent-management globally.” What later became clear is that when confronted with challenging professional problems, Regina not only intervened to address them, she also described her experiences in the form of scholarship which led to two books being published before she joined DSL.

With deep HR experience, she thought she knew what to expect at Jefferson DSL and what she meant by writing, “revolution of corporate talent-management”; but, she was wrong. Being exposed to complexity, systems and design thinking – topics not discussed within her HR learning or practices - created a paradigm shift which she described in her dissertation, [*Rethinking Human Resources Management In A Complex Context: Proposing Systemic Human Resources Management \(SYS HRM\)*](#). This led to her workshop for the Center for Systems Studies at Hull University, and her negotiations among multiple publishers who want to publish her proposed books on SYS HRM.

Dr. Regina Tendayi is currently Director of Strategic Talent Management for Bayada Home Health Care where she supervises multiple Directors and develops HR policies, objectives, and metrics to build Bayada’s HR organization. [LinkedIn Profile](#).

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Complex Systems Leadership (CSL)

CSL Cohort 1



Harry McCloskey, DBA, PhD

Dr. Harry McCloskey entered CSL, having earned a Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) from Wilmington University and as a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives (FACHE). At the time, he was Vice President/Hospital Administrator at Jefferson Health Northeast where he was responsible for the operations of the Jefferson Torresdale Campus. In his application materials, he described *Mitroff's classic Type 3 Error*:

I am interested in pursuing the PhD in CSL to strengthen my ability to lead in a complex and ever-changing healthcare organization. I have been in healthcare administration for almost 10 years in both academic and community hospital setting and have seen countless situations where the organization was focusing on the wrong problem. Most of these efforts end in failure with a significant financial or employee engagement loss. I would like this program to teach me to focus my efforts and energy on solving the right problems.

As a CSL student taking courses with John Pourdehnad, Larry Hirschhorn, and others, Harry learned about complexity, systems and design thinking resulting in his co-authoring papers and project reports including [Disruptive Effects of the Coronavirus – Errors of Commission and of Omission?](#) and [Our Wicked Problem](#) which described the benefits of systems thinking approaches and tools for complex problem formulation and intervention. **Dr. McCloskey is now** Chief Operating Officer at Jefferson Health - Einstein Montgomery. [LinkedIn Profile](#). [Jefferson Health News Report](#).





Venard Scott Koerwer, EdD, PhD

While waiting for the Jefferson PhD program to launch, Scott was first admitted to DSL where he completed a set of courses for a year. When CSL began, he was admitted having earned an EdD from University of Pennsylvania. His job at that time was VP of Strategy and Planning and Vice Dean of Graduate Education at Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine. He wrote,

After twenty-five entrepreneurial years in higher education I had become disillusioned with the traditional models of education leadership and appreciative that single industries, even higher education, were not positioned to create solutions for our most complex social problems. Working at Geisinger, I concluded that I was still not prepared for the next twenty years of my career and that my desire to take on increasingly complex, multi-industry problems required additional, formal education. The Jefferson programs can address this. Leveraging the learning from the DMgt and now the PhD program to inform development of our new academic programs and partner relations will add perspective that would not be possible without my enrollment.

After completing deep advanced study in complex systems, writing and delivering education programs on the challenges of navigating complexity, he accepted a position as Executive VP and Chief Administrative Officer at the Wright Center for Graduate Medical Education then left for a dream job at Lehigh University where he had earned an MA in Government. **Dr. Koerwer is now** Executive Director of Lehigh's Iacocca Institute. His role involves direction of Lehigh's Global Village which brings university students and professionals from around the world to Lehigh for five weeks each summer to learn how to work across cultures and lead in a global community. [LinkedIn Profile](#). [Iacocca Institute](#).





Pamela Tull, DMgt, PhD

Pamela entered the PhD program immediately after completing the Jefferson DMgt and consequently is the only person in the world to earn the world's only dual-doctorate in Leadership, the **DMgt, PhD**. At the time of her admission, she was 1st Chief/Supervisor (Program Analyst) at the US Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), but planning with her husband Dr. Robert Tull, to establish a professional consultancy, *CoachingSolutions 180*.

As a DMgt then PhD student, Pamela was exposed to the wide range of approaches and theories that are applied within the challenges of navigating (formulating then intervening) complex problems. She wrote in one of her PhD papers,

Understanding the context of a problem will dictate the lens to view the problem. However, because the lens is blurred by complexity when looking at messes or wicked problems, multiple lenses, not merely approaches, are needed.

This understanding that expansion to multiple lens/frameworks and multiple theories/methods are needed for complex problems underpins her professional coaching statement, as noted:

We use systemic coaching techniques, including coaching the whole person and not compartmentalizing our clients' lives. It is through a broadening of the awareness of life connections that produce desired growth and developmental outcomes.

Holding certificates as Associate Certified Coach (ACC) from the International Coaching Federation and Master Resilience Trainer from the US Army in addition to two earned doctorates, **Dr. Tull is now** president of *CoachingSolutions 180*. [LinkedIn Profile](#). [CoachingSolutions 180](#).

DMgt in Strategic Leadership Candidates

“Final 4 in 24”



Rev. Alfred (Al) Bradley, C.Ss.R.

Father Al is working with Drs. Larry Starr and Dominick Volini on his dissertation, ***“Addressing the Challenges of a Catholic Parish with Systemic Design Problem Solving.”*** Father Al’s [Profile](#).



Guy Thigpen

Guy is working with Drs. Larry Starr, Jean-Marc Choukroun and Larry Hirschhorn on his dissertation, ***“Addressing a Municipal Office of Property Assessment Data Quality Problem Using a Complexity Framework.”***

[LinkedIn Profile](#). [Econosolutions Profile](#).



John Ervin

John is working with Drs. Larry Starr and Teresa Wolfgang, and Professor Mark Sunderland on his dissertation, “*A Systems Informed Approach to the Complex Challenges of the Industrial Hemp Industry in Pennsylvania.*”

[LinkedIn Profile.](#)



Raul Virella

Raul is working with Dr. Larry Starr on his dissertation, “*Strategic Enforcement: A Mindset Shift from Analytic to Systemic Strategy.*”

[LinkedIn Profile.](#)

