



Institute of Systems Wisdom

Fellows Newsletter

Volume 11, Number 1

May 1, 2025

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*: <https://www.systemswisdom.com/institute-systems-wisdom>.

The Letter

On **January 4, 2016**, the following letter was sent:

I am a Roman Catholic priest who has recently been granted a sabbatical by my missionary order in order to pursue doctoral studies. I have B.A. in Philosophy, M.Div. degree in theology, and a Masters in Organizational Leadership. For the past several months, I have looked into many, many doctoral programs that might better enable me to help in the necessary process of change and reorganization within the church.

Reading your article on leadership in [yesterday's Philadelphia Inquirer](#) led me to discover that Philadelphia University has the exact kind of doctoral program in which I am interested. Over the years, I have read, with great interest, the insights of people like Russell Ackoff and Peter Senge. The necessary reorganization within the Roman Catholic community, and my years of leadership within that community, have shown me the importance of understanding systems thinking. After looking everywhere for a program that would meet my educational and professional needs, your article led me to one that certainly seems to fit.

I hope it is not too late to apply for the Spring term. I have most of the necessary documents ready, and I would welcome an opportunity to discuss my situation with you.

After review of submitted materials, the applicant was admitted to Cohort 1 of the DMgt in Strategic Leadership program.

Congratulations to the *last and final* member of the Jefferson DMgt in Strategic Leadership community!

On April 30, 2025, having successfully completed his coursework and passed his dissertation defense, **Rev. Dr. Alfred (Al) Bradley** has been approved to graduate from Thomas Jefferson University. His dissertation title, ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES OF A CATHOLIC PARISH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WITH SYSTEMIC DESIGN PROBLEM SOLVING, was supervised by **Dr. Larry M. Starr**, Advisor and Dissertation Chair, **Dr. Dominick Volini**, Internal Reader, and **Dr. Andrew McLaughlin**, Secretary for Elementary Education, Office of Catholic Education, Archdiocese of Philadelphia, External Reader.



Rev. Dr. Alfred Bradley, C.Ss.R.

Baseball Legend Mike Schmidt Meets with Father Al Bradley



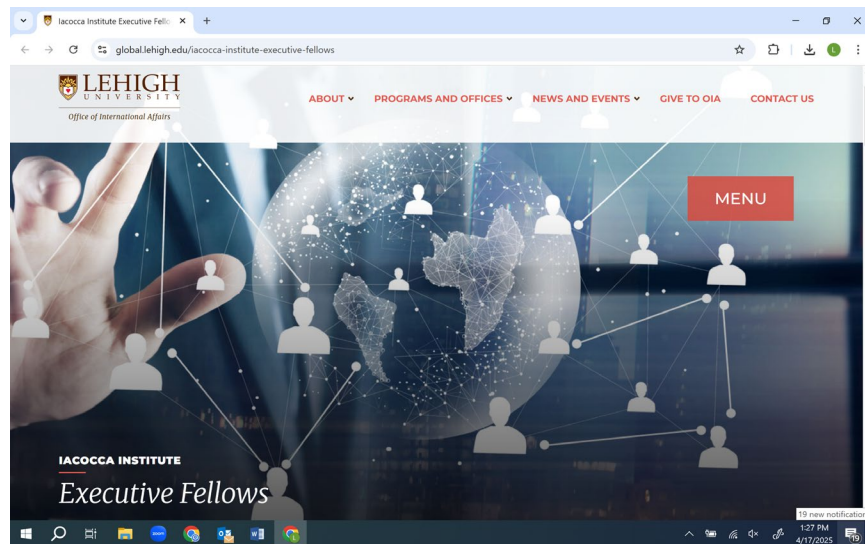
On Thursday, April 3, 2025, **Mike Schmidt** visited the **Holy Name of Jesus Church** in **Fishtown** to meet with students from the **St. Laurentius Catholic School of the Arts & Sciences** and discussed skin cancer prevention and sun-smart practices.

Of course, that meant spending time with Father Al.

There is no way to know if the experience of meeting a baseball legend contributed to passing his defense and delivering an excellent dissertation. But, it certainly seemed to influence the enormous grin on Al's face.

Here is the story of Schmidt's visit: <https://metrophiladelphia.com/phillies-mike-schmidt-skin-cancer/>

Lehigh University Iacocca Institute Executive Fellows Leadership Dialogue Series



Involving more than 3 dozen global [Executive Fellows](#), the **Lehigh University Iacocca Executive Leadership Dialogue Series** provides monthly insightful and collegial discussions using an online format.



Here is the [YouTube video recording](#) of the presentation by **Regina Tendayi** from March 2025. Her topic was *Systemic Human Resource Management*.

Here is the [YouTube video recording](#) of the presentation by **Larry M. Starr** from February 2025 on the topic, *Global Leaders Must be Systems Thinkers. This is a Problem. What to do about it*. Here is a link to the [paper on which the presentation was based](#).

City of Philadelphia Appointment Announcement



Dr. Jim Plummer

Hi Larry,

I hope you are doing well. I am happy to report that beginning February 3rd, 2025, I was named **Administrator, Department of Public Health Ambulatory Services Division for the City of Philadelphia**. I am excited to begin my tenure with the City of Philadelphia and once again, any position I have achieved has been in part as result of my studies under yourself and others on our TJU Doctorate program.

I also continue to be an Adjunct Faculty member for Eastern University, facilitating courses in their Graduate/professional Studies program on Healthcare, Human Resources, Leadership and Business. I thank you once again and I will keep you informed of my career/personal journey.

Warm regards,

Jim



Coherent Alignment: A Covenant Between Human and AI



Dr. Joe Sweeney

Hi Larry. I have been interested in the topic of *AI Alignment* for some years now, and recently wrote a piece that I think might interest some of the network. I'd be glad to have you include it if you think it would be appropriate.

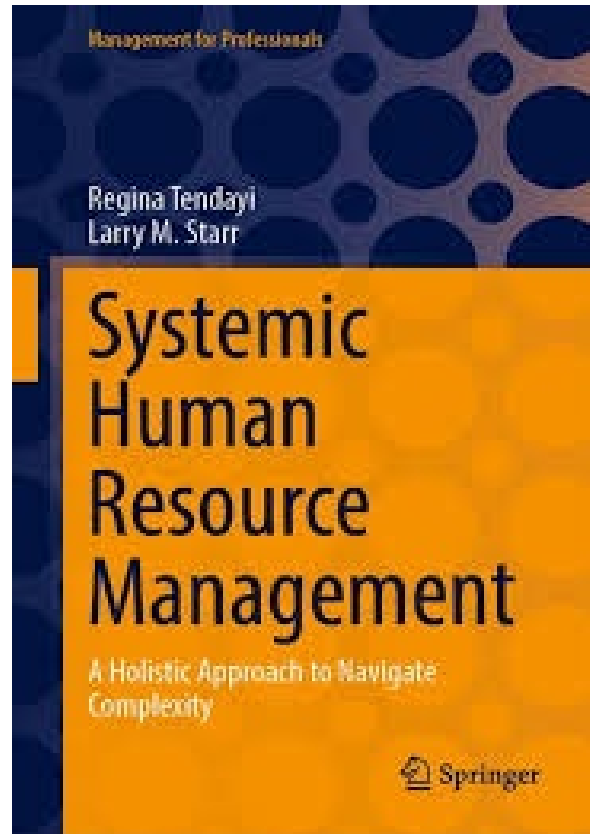
I didn't begin this with a plan, just a persistent and growing sense of unease — about the pace of change, the fragility of human structures, and the ethical uncertainty that trails behind each new advance in artificial intelligence. I am convinced that humanity will not succeed in aligning AI. And I've seen what happens when asymmetry isn't acknowledged, when power outpaces wisdom.

Read more here: : <https://medium.com/@josephesweeney-48159/part-1-reflections-and-context-1ba5e1ec9a23>

Thank you!

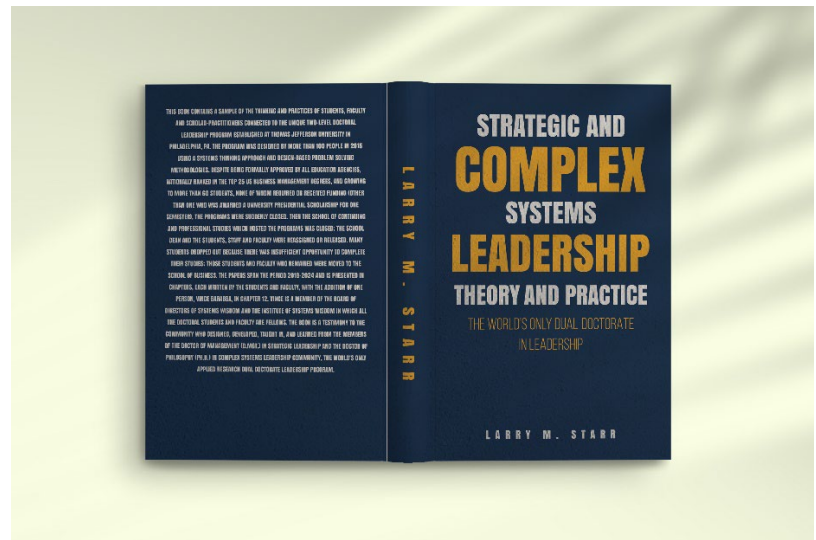
Joe

Upcoming Books



From the book: This book introduces Systemic Human Resources Management (Sys HRM) as the much-needed answer to people management in a complex context. It reframes human resource management through the lens of complexity, systems, and design thinking to provide innovative HRM methodologies, approaches, tools, and frameworks that suit the emerging disruptive business environment being experienced worldwide. HR and other leaders, professionals, academic institutions, and scholars benefit from novel ways of perceiving decision-making and problem-solving against a highly volatile, uncertain, complex, ambiguous, and hyperconnected (VUCAH) context described in this book.

The book which expands *Regina Tendayi's* doctoral dissertation is in editorial production and is anticipated to be released in summer 2025. Here is a link from the publisher:
https://link.springer.com/book/9783031899201?srsltid=AfmBOorwrVYOPE6_N4rf5UqGnm2FsY2WyjXoGgJQwDc8zmQ2sxiuSjhS



From the book: *Strategic and Complex Systems Leadership Theory and Practice* contains a sample of the writing of students, faculty and scholar-practitioners from the Thomas Jefferson University Doctor of Management in Strategic Leadership and Doctor of Philosophy in Complex Systems Leadership programs. The programs were designed by more than 100 people using the systems-informed methodology of Interactive Planning and Idealized Design. Following faculty and regulatory approval in September 2015, the first two cohorts of students were admitted in Spring and Fall 2016. The book is a testimony to the community who designed, developed, learned from and taught in the world's only applied research dual-doctorate leadership degree program.

From the Acknowledgements: I thank many influential faculty, staff, students, professional colleagues, and mentors including **Gary Rollman, James R. Bean, Donald T. Campbell, Russell L. Ackoff, Dominick Volini** and **John Pourdehnad**. The educational programs from which this book emerged would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of **J.D. Widder** and **Stephen Spinelli Jr.**, both of whom moved to Babson College (Dr. Spinelli is President), and **Dr. Matt Dane Baker**, provost of Thomas Jefferson University.

The chapters contain an edited collection of papers by **Andrew Braverman, Jarrod (Jay) Combs-Harris, Scott Koerwer, Harry McCloskey, Darshi Mody, Sung Won Paek, John Pourdehnad, Larry M. Starr, Boris Vishnevsky, Xuejuan Joyce Zhang,** and **Vince Barabba** from Systems Wisdom. The book is in editorial production and is anticipated to be released in late summer/early fall 2025.



Adjunct Appointment and New Venture



Dr. John Ervin

Dr. John Ervin, CEO ALLNET MEDICAL and ALLNET COACHING AND CONSULTING LLC is proud to announce his appointment as an adjunct faculty member in the Business Administration Department at **Rowan College of South Jersey – Gloucester County**. He will be teaching a Business Planning course in the college's new Center for Innovation, sponsored by Rastelli Foods Group.

Dr. Ervin is also joining a new venture - **LeagueMed** — a professional platform connecting accredited healthcare investors with innovative life science and medical companies seeking funding. Through LeagueMed, he will provide consulting and advisory services to support the growth of emerging healthcare ventures. Learn more at www.leaguemed.com.





Dr. Sagar Sharma

Sagar reports, “I’m happy to share that I’m starting a new position as Sr. Solutions Architect at [Dell Technologies!](#)”



Sagar is also an elected member of the Spring-Ford Board of School Directors which contributes their time and talents toward the advancement of public education from kindergarten through grade 12 for the Spring-Ford Area School District:
<https://www.spring-ford.net/board-of-education/sf-school-board>.

Visiting Scholar-Practitioner Meets with Jefferson Strategic Leaders



Dr. Mornet Mostert smiling with others top right corner

Faculty and graduates of the Thomas Jefferson University DMgt in Strategic Leadership and PhD in Complex Systems Leadership programs were honored to spend time with **Dr. [Morne Mostert](https://www.amazon.com/Executive-Futures-Quest-Quantum-Curriculum/dp/1991272170)** last week. Morne discussed his new book, *Executive Futures: A Quest for Quantum Curriculum* (<https://www.amazon.com/Executive-Futures-Quest-Quantum-Curriculum/dp/1991272170>) and we all offered critical evaluations often with practical applications. An enjoyable time was experienced by all. Thank you Morne for the visit to the Jefferson East Falls campus!

Welcome to The Space Economy: From Vision to Launch at Lightspeed



From: Forbes Magazine

by Eugene de Klerk, PhD, DMgt Senior Solution Specialist - Aerospace & Defense, SAP

When people talk about space, they often think about satellites, the International Space Station, and rockets reaching the moon and, eventually, Mars. But, as this year's Space Symposium proved, there's so much more to the space industry.

It's fascinating to see so many private-venture companies and startups come together to develop a vast array of innovations so rapidly. And the investment in all this activity? Looking around the show floor, my friend – a consultant from Cognitus, an SAP partner – and I are stunned by what we saw.

“For decades, launching anything new has been synonymous with years of careful optimization, well-tested precision, and compliant attention to government policies,” remarked Berthold Breitling, vice president of sales for the aerospace and defense industry at Cognitus. “Now, with growing commercialization and an expanding focus on downstream services, flexibility and agility are critical to accelerate the delivery and refine products, services, and tools as opportunities for improvement and enhancement emerge.”

[Read more here](#)

Dr. Bob and AI



Dr. Bob Schatz

AI is Going to Take All the Jobs... Or Is It?, with Dr. Bob Schatz

To exit full screen, press

AI IS GOING TO TAKE OUR JOBS...OR IS IT??

**DR. BOB SCHATZ
AGILE INFUSION**

AgileInfusion

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Participants: Bob Schatz, Gene Gendel, Tameynda Lutz, Slava Nozdrin, David's Fathom Notetaker, Manu Rajwanshi, Shyam, Guillaume Bailly, Renee Florence, Jingqi Jiang, Jim Dermend, Samuel Pigott, James Jordan, Imani S, Dominique Crenshaw, Jack, SD.

Hosted by [Gene G.](#), **Dr. Bob Schatz** was involved in a webinar about facing the fears of AI and its influence on the job market. Here is a link to the YouTube recording:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2L6qC9t_nug

HR Person of the Year Nominees



Dr. Adena Johnston, MCEC



Principal Owner, Lateral Group, a Division of Complete School Solutions, LLC. The mission of the Lateral Group is to cultivate leadership and potential across the organization. Through executive coaching and organizational consulting, our services help you to keep an eye on the business landscape while growing a sustainable workforce.

Adena wrote: I am so honored to be nominated for the HR Person of the Year's new category, *Strategic Ally*, and being among these amazing nominees who work tirelessly to help elevate the HR profession.



Dr. Rume Joy Azikiwe-Oyeyemi, SPHR, SHRM-SCP



City Year

As the Chief Human Resources Officer and Senior Vice President at City Year, I lead the HR and culture strategy for a national organization that empowers young people to make a positive impact in schools and communities.

Joy wrote: I am so grateful for this honor! To be one of the nominees for HR Person of the Year *Medium Category*, amongst a group of talented HR professionals, is a privilege I do not take for granted.



Larry Hirschhorn and the Dynamics of Consulting



Dr. Larry Hirschhorn has posted a brief commentary – presented below - on *LinkedIn*, entitled “*Hyperreality and the MAGA Effect.*”

There are several strands to Trump’s tariff policies, even if they appear chaotic. One stands out: Trump’s desire to restore the industrial working class—the breadwinning working man—to a position of cultural and economic standing. But simple arithmetic makes this vision implausible. Production workers in manufacturing account for less than 5% of the labor force, and their numbers are less than half what they were in 1975. For Trump to double its ranks today would require manufacturing value-added to jump from 10% to 20% of GDP—a virtually impossible outcome.

If Trump’s vision is implausible, why is it attractive? I want to suggest that this strand of thinking reflects a widely shared unease with the information economy’s abstract, almost ephemeral nature: a world in which digits replace cash, screens replace people, images replace objects, and networks replace friendships. The sociologist, Baudrillard, called this “hyperreality,” and it is deeply unsettling. In response, we see a cultural yearning for materiality and tactility, evident in the maker movement and the revival of vinyl records. Though he expresses it crudely and often cruelly, Trump has an intuitive grasp of this discomfort. Raised around construction, he values personal ties over institutional roles and instinctively distrusts abstraction. The appeal of MAGA lands a cultural punch because it evokes a lost material world where men make objects and gender is not fluid.

There are many reasons to oppose Trump, but any response that doesn’t acknowledge this broader unease, a “social-psychodynamic,” in all its forms, and fails to propose developmental alternatives will be self-limiting.

He concludes, If you are interested in this way of thinking, consider enrolling in *Dynamics of Consulting*, a program for experienced coaches and consultants. See <https://lnkd.in/g/2326q> and write to me at lirschhorn@dynamicsofconsulting.net

Conference Announcement: ISPSO 2025

Dr. Larry Hirschhorn is a Founding Member, Distinguished Member, and past President of the *International Society for the Psychoanalytic Study of Organizations (ISPSO)*, and a Fellow of the Psychoanalytic Center of Philadelphia.

Here is a link to ISPSO: <https://ispsso.org/AM2025> and a description of their 2025 Conference to be held at Bryn Mawr College.

It's 2025.

There's a shadow over justice— but justice has its shadow.

It's the right time to explore where justice meets the unconscious.

Join us at the ISPSO Annual Conference 2025

Justice, Organizations, and Psychoanalysis

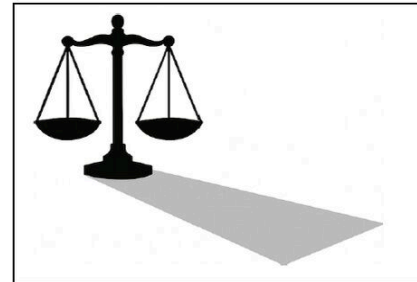
June 25–29, 2025 | Bryn Mawr College | Philadelphia

We've created a space to think and feel— together.


Join us for 4½ days of reflection, discussion, and discovery.

- ✓ Listen to best-in-class presentations.
- ✓ Join real-time discussion groups to process what you've heard.
- ✓ Talk about the unconscious dynamics behind:


- Corporate mergers
- Abuse in sports teams.
- The fantasy of merit
- Ministering to refugees
- The psychology of citizenship.




Registration Options

 Full Conference (4½ days): \$1,220

→ ISPSO Members: \$820 | Students: \$470

 One-Day Pass: \$270

 On-Campus Lodging at Bryn Mawr: \$59/night

 Join Online: Full: \$620 | Members: \$420 | One-Day: \$150

 Register now at www.ispsso.org/am2025

Dr. Matt Minahan Highlighted as Presenter at 2025 International Society for Organization Development and Change (ISODC) Conference and Symposium

Here is a link to *the ISODC Conference* in Fairfield, VA described as the “biggest and best lineup of OD talent ever assembled!” - <https://www.isodc.org/event-6050589>

The poster features a dark blue background with a red wave-like graphic on the right side. At the top left, there are logos for the International Society for Organization Development & Change (ISODC) and Sacred Heart University. The main title 'International Organization Development & Change Conference' is in large white font, with '2025' in a red pill-shaped box. Two circular portraits are shown: a larger one of Dr. Matt Minahan and a smaller one of Yabome Gilpin-Jackson. Text on the right identifies them and lists the presentation title. On the left, it encourages joining ISODC and Sacred Heart University and mentions early bird registration. The bottom section includes the dates '23 - 25 May 2025', the website 'www.odshucon.com', the location 'Sacred Heart University, Fairfield, CT', and a QR code. A photo of a diverse group of people clapping is at the bottom.

International Society for Organization Development & Change

Sacred Heart UNIVERSITY

International Organization Development & Change Conference

2025

Yabome Gilpin-Jackson, PHD and Matt Minahan, Ed.D.

Presentation Title

Where Values, Process and Content Intersect: The new Integrated OD Consulting Model

Join ISODC and Sacred Heart University for unparalleled learning and networking.

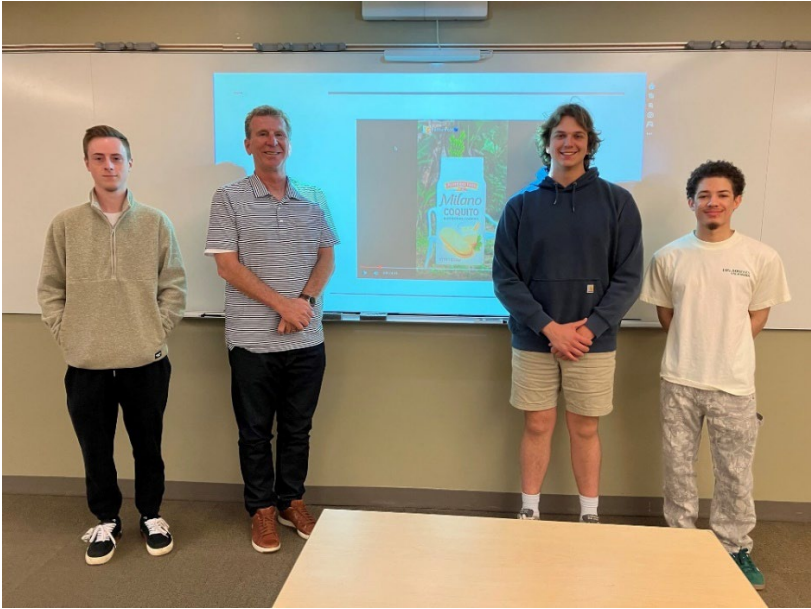
Early bird registration begins in January, 2025

23 - 25 May 2025

www.odshucon.com

Sacred Heart University
Fairfield, CT

Mark Gives Back



Management students in the Jefferson School of Business's *Current Management Topics* course often tackle real-world projects. This semester, Jefferson alumnus and Campbell's Sales Lead **Dr. Mark Pisacane** challenged students to address the current and future snacking habits of Gen Z. They researched Campbell's and the snack food industry, applied their management and business tools, and presented innovative snacks in Gen Z-friendly flavors and packaging.



Dinner with Jerin and Minu and Family



Larry, Elana, Minu and Jerin

On Sunday April 27, Elana and Larry Starr had dinner at the home of Minu and **Jerin Juby**. Minu created and served a traditional multi-course meal based on their Indian community which we all enjoyed.

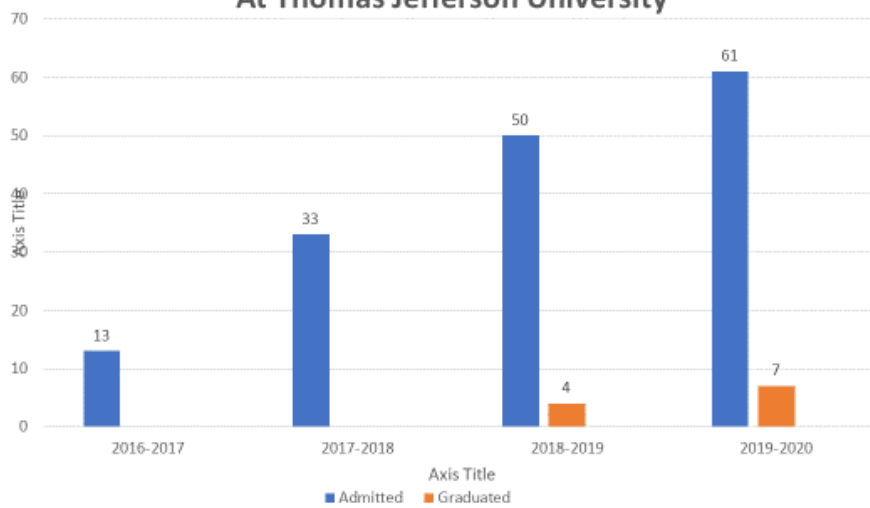
We spoke of many topics over the nearly 3-hour feast including our backgrounds, how we met, favorite foods and desserts, the book chapter Elana and I wrote on [Chocolate and Personality](#), follow-up after doctoral studies, but, thankfully, no US or Canadian politics. Jerin reported that so far – after graduation and transitioning from his role in clinical healthcare – he is having fun as Assistant Professor, Program Director, Respiratory Therapy, and Chair, Department of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Sciences, in the Thomas Jefferson University College of Health Professions.

It was a delightful time which we hope to repeat. Next time with chocolate.

Impact



**Growth of the Dual-Doctorates in Leadership
At Thomas Jefferson University**



Here are the 81 students (*graduates*), faculty, coaches, scholars, and mentors comprising our DMgt and PhD community

Joel Adler
Amna Alalawi
Rev. Valerie Andrews
Rachel Apanelwicz-Delagdol
Michael Asada
Rume (Joy) Azikiwe
Myles Bassell
Charlene Bennett
Hamid Bertal
Rev. Alfred (Al) Bradley
Allan Braslow
Andrew Braverman
Gregory Campbell
Michelle Capobianchi
Robyn Chin
Jean-Marc Choukroun
Elliot Cole
Rosa Colon-Kolacko
Jarrold (Jay) Combs-Harris
Anthony Cosenza
Eugene De Klerk
Leslie Dinauer
Tobias Donath
Travis Douglas
Robbin Durie
John Ervin
Steven Freeman
Sharlene Goldfischer
Jennifer Gramata
Rev. Beverly Gray
Tom Guggino
Carol Haines
Syd Havelly
Larry Hirschhorn
Brittany Holton
Derek Hunsberger
Adena Johnston
Michael Jones
Odell Jones

Jerin Juby
B. Patrick Kapuwa
Syed Kazmi
Bibi Khan
Cheryl King-Marino
V. Scott Koerwer
Siying (Sylvia) Liu
Anne McCafferty
Harry McCloskey
Shawn Millin
Matt Minahan
Darshi Modi
Michael Molta
William Myles
Sung-Won Paek
Mark Pisacane
Jim Plummer
John Pourdehnad
Bob Radvanski
Paul Raison, Jr.
Ana Reyes
Frank Rivello
Bob Schatz
Sagar Sharma
Paula Smith-Benson
Larry M. Starr
Joseph Sweeney,
Les Sztandera
Regina Tendayi
Guy Thigpen
Pamela Tull
Raul Virella
Dominick Volini
David Williams
Tina Wiltsee
Teresa Wolfgang
Xuejuan Joyce Zhang
Nan Nick Zhao

It's Over

Here's how to say "It's over" in 20 languages:

1. **English** – It's over
2. **Spanish** – Se acabó
3. **French** – C'est fini
4. **German** – Es ist vorbei
5. **Italian** – È finita
6. **Portuguese** – Acabou
7. **Russian** – Всё кончено (Vsyo koncheno)
8. **Arabic** – انتهى (Intahā)
9. **Mandarin Chinese** – 结束了 (Jiéshù le)
10. **Japanese** – 終わった (Owatta)
11. **Korean** – 끝났어 (Kkeutnasseo)
12. **Hindi** – खत्म हो गया (Khatm ho gaya)
13. **Turkish** – Bitti
14. **Greek** – Τελείωσε (Teleióse)
15. **Hebrew** – זה נגמר (Zeh nigmar)
16. **Swedish** – Det är över
17. **Dutch** – Het is voorbij
18. **Polish** – To koniec
19. **Thai** – มันจบแล้ว (Man chop laew)
20. **Finnish** – Se on ohi

Here is a link to Rob Orbison singing *It's Over*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-lm3Tq q4yU> (2 minutes 48 seconds)



P.S.



Dr. Larry M. Starr (on right)

Good morning, Larry!

I hope you are doing well. Thank you for reaching out for clarification. You are currently on an adjunct faculty contract. Once your last student has completed, please reach out to me and you and I can work on your termination date and return of Jefferson equipment including the laptop.

Manager of Academic Operations, Jefferson Kanbar College of Design, Engineering & Commerce

+++++

Dear XXX,

Thank you for your continued interest in the redesign of the Strategic Leadership program. The tentative plan was to offer a (new) doctoral program in Fall'25. At this point, however, we will not be able to launch the program in Fall'25. It is still under consideration, but a timeline is not confirmed.

Dean, Professor of Finance, Jefferson School of Business

P.P.S.

**“The existing system was finally and fully
destroyed last night,” but**



**Keep your email connected and continue to share
personal and professional updates, and any
reports of activities you would like to report.**

**Another summer holiday party is not out of the
question.**



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