

Cohort 17

Ph.D. in Business Administration

Welcome Reception

8/8/25 - 6-8pm
Embassy Suites Kennesaw, GA



**KENNESAW STATE
UNIVERSITY**

COLES COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
Ph.D. in Business Administration

Greetings!

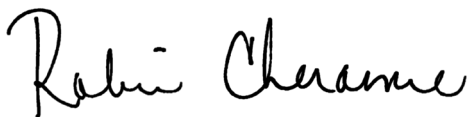
Congratulations and welcome to the Kennesaw State University Ph.D. in Business Administration Program. Your enrollment is compelling evidence of your accomplishments in life and your keen abilities to be successful in a rigorous graduate program.

Our faculty have planned for you an innovative curriculum that I am sure you will find challenging, engaging, and highly rewarding. Throughout the program, you will have the opportunity to work with scholars from Coles College as well as elite global scholars from around the world. These scholars are experts in their fields and are dedicated to helping you achieve your full academic potential.

I encourage you to take time to understand the full value of the academic community that is the Coles College at Kennesaw State University. We are very proud of our campus community and the many services we provide. As I am sure you know, the Coles "brand" is highly distinctive and has achieved significant regional and national prominence. You will be very proud to call yourself an alumnus of our Ph.D. program.

We stand ready to support you in this experience, and I look forward to meeting each of you personally.

And again...Congratulations!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robin Cheramie". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robin Cheramie, Ph.D.
Dean, Coles College of Business
Professor of Management
Kennesaw State University

Dear Cohort 17 Students:

Welcome to Kennesaw State University's Ph.D. in Business Administration Program. As a student in Cohort 17, you will find that you are among a diverse and highly accomplished group of students.

From this first day in the Program, work to build your academic network. This includes fellow students within your cohort, students in cohorts ahead of you, faculty, and others within this small academic community. Get to know the alumni of the Program, as you will find many fondly look back at the time they spent completing the Program and the relationships that they formed. You are starting to build your academic network, where some of the relationships will become life-long bonds.

You will experience several challenges as you enter this journey. A Ph.D. is a distinguishing degree and requires significant effort and dedication to obtain. Very few people ever obtain a doctoral degree. Use your network and family to help you through these challenges. Always remember that faculty are here to help you succeed in this journey, while challenging you to meet the rigorous standards of the Program.

You will find this experience life-changing. I also hope that you find it an enjoyable experience. I look forward to seeing everyone grow during this journey!

Sincerely,

Saurabh Gupta

Dr. Saurabh Gupta
Executive Director – Ph.D. in
Business Administration Program
Coles College of Business
Kennesaw State University



Cohort 17 Students

CORY JACKSON

(MARKETING)



Cory Jackson has more than 20 years of experience in the financial services industry and he joined BB&T now Truist in 2015. Jackson has served as a Community Business Development Officer, Retail Small Business Leader for the Northern GA Region, and was promoted to SVP/Virtual Retail Banking and Associate Banking Manager for the EMSEG Enterprise in 2018. Jackson earned his bachelor's degree in Political Science from Georgia Southern University and his Executive MBA from Mercer University's Stetson School of Business. Mercer selected him to lecture as an adjunct professor in 2013 and he currently serves on the Trustee Board for the University. Cory and his wife Kay started Sandy Springs Janitorial Services in 2012 and later entered into a joint venture with ABM Industries which is the largest facilities management company in the US (trade: ABM). This joint venture eventually secured the cleaning contract for Coke Headquarters USA in Atlanta GA and was responsible for their 2 million sq.

ft. Campus. Jackson previously served as a board member for the Sandy Springs Rotary Club, Leadership Sandy Springs, 100 Black Men of DeKalb County, Youth Leadership Sandy Springs (founding member), and ART's Sandy Springs. In addition, he served as Chairman for the Sandy Springs Perimeter Chamber in 2013. Jackson currently resides in Stone Mountain, GA with his wife Kay, daughter J'Adore, son Hunter, and their Yorkie Jax.

LANA PRIOLEAU

(MARKETING)



My name is Lana Prioleau, and I am excited to introduce myself as part of cohort 17. I currently work in Sales, and my academic journey includes a BA in Business Administration and a Master's in Organizational Development. I am now pursuing my PhD in Marketing with a focus on artificial intelligence, driven by my desire to better understand how to utilize data to improve the sales process. I find the intersection of AI and marketing both challenging and inspiring, and I am eager to apply these insights to real-world business challenges. Outside of my professional and academic pursuits, music is a huge part of my life. I love to sing and am a proud member of the gospel group David Walker and High Praise. We are thrilled to be working on our most recent project, which we hope to release this fall.

On the personal side, I am blessed with a wonderful family. My husband is retired from both the Navy and the police force, with his last assignment in Washington, DC. Together, we have two amazing children and a beautiful granddaughter who keeps us all on our toes.

I look forward to connecting with everyone and sharing this exciting journey together!

CURTIS BROWN

(MARKETING)



Hello classmates! My name is Curtis Brown, and I look forward to both learning with and from you during our PhD journey. I have been teaching business classes at the collegiate level for the last 3 years. Recently, I joined the faculty at West Georgia Technical College in LaGrange, GA as an Instructor in the Business Management department. Professionally, I have experience in investment banking, corporate finance, business development, sales and as a founder of my own consulting company. I believe in giving back through community service and serve on a number of boards and commissions in my city and throughout west-central Georgia - I even ran for City Council a couple of times! This is an unprecedented time to have an opportunity to study the marketing discipline, in depth. Artificial intelligence

and blockchain technologies are especially interesting to me, and I look forward to researching the impact of these tools and implications for consumers, industry and policymakers. When I have spare time, I enjoy tinkering with gadgets, working on home improvement projects and traveling with family and friends. This year, I will celebrate 14 years of marriage to my wife Shaundre. We have two amazing kids - Curtis III & Sage. Pursuing a PhD would be impossible without their support and encouragement, for which I am extremely grateful.

LESTER ARNOLD

(MANAGEMENT)



My name is Lester L. Arnold, Sr., and I serve as the vice president and chief human resources officer at RAND. With extensive experience in human resources leadership spanning both the private sector and academia, I bring a broad and deep perspective to my role. Throughout my career, I have held leadership positions in HR functions such as employee engagement, organizational development, talent acquisition, compensation, benefits, and payroll. Before joining RAND, I was the chief human resources officer and vice president for Human Resources and Payroll at George Mason University, and I previously served in similar capacities at Winston-Salem State University. My private-sector experience includes senior HR roles at FOCUS Brands, ARAMARK Healthcare, Lowe's, and Wells Fargo. I

earned an M.B.A. with a concentration in human resources from the University of Hartford and a B.S. in accounting from Norfolk State University. I also hold Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR) certification from the Human Resources Certification Institute and the Society for Human Resource Management – Senior Certified Professional (SHRM-SCP) credential. My research interests focus on enhancing employee engagement and well-being, exploring strategies to cultivate positive workplace cultures that drive organizational performance. Outside of work, I enjoy weight training and bodybuilding as a way to stay physically and mentally focused. I am also a proud father of three adult sons who inspire me every day.

AMELIA BOZEMAN

(MANAGEMENT)



I serve as a faculty lecturer in the Jones College of Business Department of Management at Middle Tennessee State University, where I teach courses in management, entrepreneurship, not-for-profit organization management, and leadership. Prior to joining the Jones College faculty full-time, I served as the director of the Tennessee Small Business Development Center at MTSU, which provides strategic services to businesses at all stages of development across a 14-county area in southern Middle Tennessee.

Over the years, I have had two consulting businesses. Through those businesses, I worked with organizations and individual clients in both the for-profit private sector and the not-for-profit sector as well as in government. During the years in between those businesses, I served as executive director of a nonprofit organization where I executed a turnaround that resulted in new and improved programs, successful new events, increased revenue streams, and greater community impact.

I earned my bachelor's degree from Austin Peay State University and my MS in management with a concentration in organizational leadership from Middle Tennessee State University.

For more than 20 years, I have been an active member of First Baptist Church in Murfreesboro, where I serve as an ordained deacon. Additionally, I have enjoyed serving on the boards of multiple nonprofit organizations, serving as president of two of them. I am a graduate of Leadership Middle Tennessee, and I am a Rotarian.

I live in Murfreesboro with my husband Randy; we have been married for 35 years. We are the parents of The Fantastic Four: Alexandra, James, Ava, and Will. We also have a bonus son, Davis (Alexandra's husband), and a fabulous granddaughter, Maura.

I enjoy competing on the Smarty Cats trivia team; our team colors are "anything leopard." I am learning to play pickleball as well; it's a blast, and the outfits are cute!

EMILY CALDERON

(MANAGEMENT)



My name is Emily Calderon, and I am a leadership development professional with a background in education and supply chain operations. I currently work at McMaster-Carr Supply Company, where I serve as a team facilitator and ERG (Employee Resource Group) leader. Prior to transitioning into the corporate sector, I spent over 11 years in public education as a dual language immersion teacher, where I developed the first Spanish-English immersion program of its kind in a public school in Georgia. This experience sparked my passion for inclusive leadership and cultural fluency in diverse environments. Academically, I hold a Master of Education and an MBA. My research interests center around cultural intelligence, diversity and inclusion practices, and leadership development in global and politically complex environments.

I enjoy reading, traveling, and exploring new coffee shops. My daughters (Isa, 16 & Camila, 4) are at the heart of everything I do. I strive to show them that resilience and service are core values. One of the most transformative experiences in my life has been leading ERG initiatives that honor cultural heritage and foster belonging. These moments have deepened my understanding of the power of representation and advocacy in professional spaces. I hope to continue merging research and practice to build more inclusive, emotionally intelligent teams across industries.

DUSTIN GRANT

(MANAGEMENT)



My name is Dustin Grant, and I am currently a Business Specialist within the Department of Defense. My professional background is in a combination of public and private organizations. I have a Bachelor of Science in Communication and a Master of Accountancy. I'm working toward a future in academia where I hope to blend research with teaching to help develop future leaders. My research interests are in organizational behavior and leadership. I am particularly interested in exploring topics such as leadership development; team dynamics; workplace motivation and productivity; and organizational culture. I currently reside in San Diego, CA where I enjoy the beach, reading, spending time with friends, and staying active outdoors.

DOUG HOLMBERG

(MANAGEMENT)



My name is Douglas Holmberg, but please call me Doug. I bring over 30 years of global leadership experience in the coatings and chemicals industry, serving in roles ranging from sales leader, regional manager, and global marketing director to CEO and board member. I spent much of my career leading business units within public global companies, as well as serving on global leadership teams. My career has spanned both North America and Europe, including eight years living and working in EMEA-based roles. Most recently, I was CEO and board member of a private equity-backed manufacturer of performance coatings, which I co-founded and led through its initial three years. I retired from full-time executive leadership in 2024 and now operate a boutique consulting practice focused on strategy and business advisory.

I hold a B.S. in Business (International Finance) from the University of Southern California and a J.D. from the University of Chicago Law School. I began my career

practicing environmental law before transitioning into executive leadership. Pursuing my Ph.D. at KSU reflects a desire to teach and mentor the next generation of business leaders while developing the academic foundation to enhance my consulting work. My research interests include leadership, business strategy, and organizational performance. My passion lies in a people-centered approach to helping organizations unlock performance through effective leadership, strategic clarity, and disciplined execution. I'm an avid traveler and lifelong learner. I enjoy cycling, skiing, reading, cooking, and exploring new cultures. I'm also a private pilot and hope to return to the skies soon.

My wife Tracy and I have been married for 32 years. We have three adult children: Erik lives in Denver and works as a data policy analyst; our twins, Christian and Kara, both live in San Francisco—Christian works in investment banking, and Kara in private equity.

MATT CHAMBLESS

(ACCOUNTING)



I'm Matt Chambless, a native of Tifton, GA now residing in Fairhope, AL. After beginning college at a small community college in my hometown, I completed my undergraduate degree at Georgia Southern University with a double-major in Accounting and Finance. I then completed my MAcc at the University of Georgia, where my work as a Research Assistant first introduced me to the academic career path. After completing my MAcc, I started my professional career in the audit practice of Grant Thornton's Atlanta office, focusing on technology companies. After nearly seven years, I left the firm for a brief stint at Northside Hospital in Atlanta. I joined CPSI (a NASDAQ-listed healthcare technology firm located in Mobile, AL) in 2012 and was promoted to Chief Financial Officer in late 2015. I served in that role for 8 years, leaving the Company in December 2023 with the aim of taking a short breather before earnestly pursuing a career in academics.

My research interests are broad, reflective of the broad experience I've garnered to-date, but mostly reflect the impact of corporate governance mechanisms on firm performance and how those impacts manifest in the real economy. Personally, I'm an avid reader and enjoy hiking and backpacking whenever I can get out West. In Summer 2024, I took the trip of a lifetime: a 2-week rafting trip the entire 280-mile length of the Grand Canyon section of the Colorado River! My immediate family is small, but full of love. As of now, it's just me, my wife (Michelle), and our 8 year-old daughter (Allison). My dual goals in life are to be the partner my wife deserves and raise a daughter equipped with the confidence of her father's adoration.

DANIELLE TAYLOR

(ACCOUNTING)



My name is Danielle Taylor. I am a CPA and lecturer of accounting at Georgia Southwestern State University in Americus, Georgia. As the first in my family to earn a four-year degree, I received a BBA in Accounting and Master of Accounting from Georgia Southern University in 2010. I began my career in public accounting with a focus on governmental and nonprofit audits. I then spent most of my accounting career as the controller of a medium-sized healthcare organization, where my responsibilities included financial and regulatory reporting, revenue cycle management, ERP system implementation, grant administration, and change of ownership applications. I began teaching part-time in August 2020, and I joined Georgia Southwestern as a full-time lecturer of accounting in January 2022. I teach Principles, Intermediate, Data Analytics, Systems, and Auditing. I also co-chair our AACSB accreditation committee and coordinate recruitment events on campus. I consider myself incredibly

fortunate to genuinely love the work that I do, and I especially enjoy mentoring our first-generation students. I am joining the PhD program at Kennesaw State University to advance in academia and pursue a tenure track faculty position. My research interests are audit committee composition and effectiveness. I spend most of my free time with my husband and our two sons, ages 8 and 2. I also serve as treasurer for Centenary Community Ministries, Inc., a nonprofit organization that provides a free weekly breakfast, community garden, and bike program for our neighbors facing homelessness and food insecurity. When time allows, I love to read and travel to new places.

BEN MILOVICH

*(RISK & DECISION
ANALYTICS)*



My name is Ben Milovich, and I bring 20 years of leadership experience spanning the military, retail, and logistics sectors. I've operated in complex environments—from combat zones to corporate boardrooms—helping teams navigate change, build scalable systems, and drive measurable results. Lately I've focused on consulting and project-based work, applying those lessons to solve real-world business challenges while exploring my next long-term opportunity. Academically, I hold an Executive MBA in Global Supply Chain from the University of Tennessee, a Master's in Homeland Security and Safety Engineering, and a Graduate Certificate in Project Management. I earned my BA in Kinesiology from Southwestern University and am now excited to join Cohort 17 as a PhD candidate in Risk and Decision Analytics at Kennesaw State University.

My research explores how Digital Twin Technology can transform fleet management by simulating routes,

equipment, and human factors in real time. By tying these digital models to actionable analytics, I aim to give carriers and logistics companies practical playbooks for lowering turnover, tightening delivery windows, and boosting profitability, without sacrificing driver well-being. This work sits at the crossroads of emerging tech, human-centered logistics, and data-driven decision-making under uncertainty. Outside of work and research, I'm a proud Marine Corps veteran, youth baseball coach, and hands-on dad to two incredible kids—a daughter who loves Taylor Swift and a son who shares my passion for sports and music. Most importantly, none of this would be possible without the unwavering support of my wife, Megan, who keeps our family grounded and thriving. We live in Johns Creek, Georgia, where life is equal parts baseball practice, DIY projects, and meaningful time together.

FORREST FONTANA

*(RISK & DECISION
ANALYTICS)*



I am the Assistant Dean of Assessment, the Alvah H. Chapman, Jr. Chair in Management and Ethics as well as a Professor of Practice in the Department of Management & Entrepreneurship at The Citadel's Baker School of Business. As Assistant Dean, I direct the Assessment and Assurance of Learning (AoL) activities for AACSB and SACSCOC accreditation, both graduate and undergraduate programs. As Chapman Chair in Management & Ethics and Professor of Practice, my primary instruction focuses on Advanced Business Analytics and Business. I bring a practitioner's perspective into the classroom, connecting research and theory to real-world events and policies, equipping students with the tools to make a thoughtful, analytical assessment of both quantitative & qualitative factors. I am the Director of the Baker School of Business Coaching (Mentoring) Program as well as the Faculty Leader for the BSB Senior Leadership Day for Management and Marketing majors. With more than twenty-

five years of experience as a professional research analyst, portfolio manager and chief investment officer, I have acquired insights and tangible skills from some of the most prominent and highly regarded global investment management firms in the industry. Additionally, I have studied finance, political economy, and behavioral science from some of the leading luminaries in academia, business and government. I earned a Master of Public Administration from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, a Master of Business Administration from Columbia University's Graduate School of Business, and a Bachelor of Science from Vanderbilt University's School of Engineering. I have been a Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) for more than twenty-five years. In addition to having been an entrepreneur & small-business owner/investor, I have held senior positions of leadership and governance in both the public service and non-profit sectors, serving as a publicly elected town official and non-profit board member.

RUPERT RIGG

(RISK & DECISION ANALYTICS)



I am Rupert Rigg, a senior consultant and strategy professional with over two decades of experience in process, operations, laboratory, and quality management. I hold a Master's degree in Management from the University of Phoenix (with distinction) and a Bachelor's degree in Agricultural Engineering (Hons.) from the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus. I also hold professional certifications, including, but not limited to: Lean Six Sigma Black Belt (LSSBB), Certified Strategy Professional (CSP), Certified Scrum Master (CSM), and SAFe 6.0 Agilist. I am passionate about nurturing talent and sharing insights through one-on-one discussions or workshops. My research interest focuses on validating the use of adaptive Markov modeling in aid of decision-making and evaluation processes for newborn screening panels by contrasting selected states and time lag effects I currently work with Booz Allen Hamilton with the health account team to

support various clients by leveraging lean and agile methodologies to support visual management of processes and strategic business transformation of operations to desired states. I use my knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) to help refine strategic plans to ensure alignment of objectives, measures, and targets. I believe in the importance of continuous learning and actively engage in professional development exercises. I married my soulmate, Moneaque, twenty-two years ago, and we have been blessed with three great children: Marc-Anthony, Abigail, and Shannon. We currently reside in Kennesaw, GA, after migrating from Spanish Town, Jamaica, in 2019. Outside of work, spending time with my family, traveling, cooking, and enjoying nature are important to me. In my free time, I enjoy outdoor activities and hobbies, including playing and watching football (soccer), listening to music, and watching a good movie.

GARY BRASWELL

*(INFORMATION
SYSTEMS)*



I am currently a Senior Product Manager at MRI Software, and have served in software delivery and technology leadership roles for the past 20+ years, most recently as the head of technology for a Blackstone portfolio company in NYC. I have a B.S. in Computer Engineering from Mississippi State University, an M.S. in Electrical Engineering from the University of Alabama in Huntsville, and an MBA (CIS emphasis) from Georgia State University. My research interest is related to overcoming inertia in AI Adoption through building organizational trust in AI. My wife and I like to travel, and we have three children - all grown - and one grandson.

JOSEPH ARNOLD

*(INFORMATION
SYSTEMS)*



My name is Joseph Arnold, and I've worked in the technology field for over 30 years, holding a wide range of roles that have shaped my experience and perspective. For the past 10 years, I've been with Ernst & Young, where I currently serve as a Global Business Manager and Operations Lead. I earned both my undergraduate degree in Sociology and my MBA from Kennesaw State University, combining a people-centered approach with strong business strategy. I live in Ellijay, Georgia, with my wife of over 30 years. We have two wonderful kids—Marie, who is 10, and Marshall, who is 7. Family is the center of my life, and I enjoy the balance between a challenging career and a fulfilling home life.

Outside of work, I enjoy working with my hands. I'm currently restoring a 1954 Ford NAA tractor, spending time landscaping our property, and steadily rebuilding our house. These projects give me a sense of accomplishment and keep me connected to the value of hard work and craftsmanship.

JAIRO DE JESUS

*(INFORMATION
SYSTEMS)*



I am currently the Vice President of Bakeries' Operations for Sugar Bowl Bakery in Tucker, GA. I have over 25 years of practical experience in the Consumable Goods Industry performing in various Supply Chain Management, Manufacturing, Logistics, Continuous Improvement, and Industrial Engineering roles. I hold a Bachelor's of Science in Industrial Engineering (University of Arkansas), a Master's of Business Administration (Baker University), a Master's of Science in Industrial Management and Systems Engineering from the University of Nebraska – Lincoln. I am a life member of the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc, life member of the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), life member of the University of Arkansas Alumni Society, past United Way Advisory Board Member (Forsyth and Fulton County), past president

of the Georgia Association for Food Protection, and a member of the Decide DeKalb Manufacturing & Distribution Council. My most proud accomplishment is to be the husband of my Queen Tammy and father of Young King Jarrison (16) and Princess Jillian (12).

Residency Schedule (MANDATORY)

**SUBJECT TO CHANGE*

Month	Residency Dates
August '25	Orientation 8/7/25 8/8/25-8/10/25 Evening Welcome Reception 8/8/25
September '25	9/5/25-9/7/25
October '25	10/3/25-10/5/25
November '25	11/7/25-11/9/25
December '25	12/5/25-12/7/25
January '26	1/9/26-1/11/26
February '26	1/30/26-2/1/26
March '26	Qualifying Exam 2/26/26 (for 2nd year students) 2/27/26-3/1/26
April '26	3/27/26-3/29/26
May '26	4/24/26-4/26/26







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