



PhD in Leadership Studies
Spring 2022 Graduates' Testimonials

Dr. Christian A. Trevino
School Principal, Ida Diaz Jr. High School



Our Lady of the Lake University welcomed my fellow colleagues and me with open arms. Circa 2016, when Dr. Hinojosa and Dr. Montoya first started classes in the fall, I knew that this program would provide me with the education, skills, and tools that I would need to serve my community better. This program taught me more about myself and what I have to offer as a servant and transformational leader. OLLU has also equipped me with the opportunity to value relationships and further expand the ability of those people around me. In addition, the leadership program has taught me more about what leadership truly means and how impactful a resonant leader can be to an organization. I am very thankful for the friends that became family. That is what I cherish the most. Thank you, OLLU and Dr. Carmody-Bubb, Dr.

Hinojosa, Dr. Montoya, Dr. Delagarza, Dr. Rownd, and Cohort 10 for providing me with so much support.

Dr. Marisol Weymouth
President and CEO, People Whisperers Solutions



At the age of 49, and in my continued pursuit of growth and development and passion for supporting people through change, I made the decision to invest in a doctorate in leadership. The decision came with the understanding for the need for commitment, discipline, and perseverance, knowing the anticipated duration and demands of the program, while managing a family and a career. This was an investment in my ways of thinking, living and leading, while advancing the discipline of leadership. The OLLU Leadership Studies Program has transformed me into an effective scholar and practitioner of leadership. It has

reinforced the importance of ethics, authenticity, benevolence, and empathy, and refined my understanding of effective leadership and followership. Learning over thirteen leadership theories, their respective history, instruments, applications, and research methods, has equipped me to effectively conduct research as well as helped me clearly identify the leadership characteristics in varying environments in order to navigate and support people through change.



OUR LADY OF THE LAKE UNIVERSITY

PhD in Leadership Studies
Spring 2022 Graduates' Testimonials

Dr. Clara Ramirez

Senior Business Intelligence Analyst, USAA



The Leadership Studies Doctoral program had all the right mix of leadership courses that prepared me to be an effective leader. Some courses provided opportunities to apply some of the leadership skills learned. This program has made me a better leader as well as a better follower because it has given me greater insights to being an effective leader. While it wasn't easy, the high standards we were held to in writing scholarly article summaries and research brought me to a new level of being a scholar that I was not even aware I was capable of achieving. Obtaining a PhD at OLLU was one of the most gratifying accomplishments. I have experienced many opened doors of opportunities that I would not have had if I had not pursued my PhD at OLLU.

Dr. Robert White

Project Controls Manager, Shell Inc.

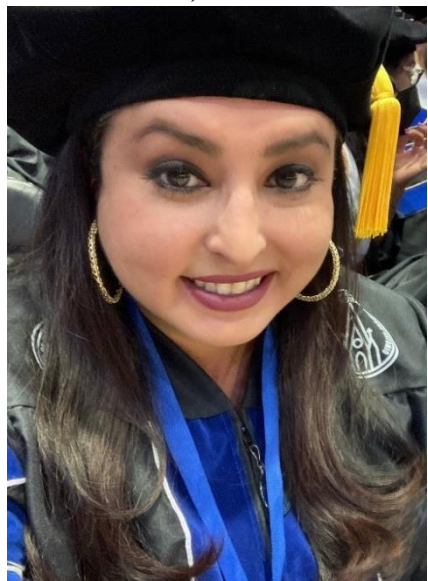


Earning my PhD in Leadership Studies at Our Lady of the Lake University was a journey of personal growth and self-awareness. I gained practical tools for everyday use as a business leader that help me connect with others, but more importantly, I gained an understanding of why I want to be leader. This program has made me a more authentic Servant Leader and given me the confidence and energy to continue my growth journey.



PhD in Leadership Studies
Spring 2022 Graduates' Testimonials

Dr. Ana Lisa Padron
Chief of Staff, Communications Office, Idea Public Schools



My earliest childhood memories are of my parents bringing me to visit the campus. Both alumni, Class of '75 and '84, my mom would share with me how she lived in the dorms and the friends she made, many of whom she remains friends with today. My dad would walk me through the halls of the university and tell me about the courses he took and that he loved how OLLU still felt the same as it did when he was a student. Those experiences must have stayed with me. In 2010, I received my master's from OLLU, and then a few years later I began my doctoral journey in Leadership Studies. The years that followed, helped me develop in a multitude of ways as both a scholar and a professional. Throughout the program we dove into theory, case studies, statistics, and so much more. I was not strong in every area at first, but I was determined. I applied myself, and with the support of my professors, I became more confident in my ability as a scholar and a leader. My transformation as a professional allowed me to contribute to my career development in leadership and catapulted my contributions in the workplace. I owe a debt of gratitude to my cohort, my professors, and to Dr. Gergen, for championing me until the last word of my dissertation was written. The experience and fulfillment of accomplishment is like none other. The Leadership Studies program at OLLU provided me with the tools and the intellectual skills that allowed me to contribute to the field of leadership studies.

Dr. Patricia Hollingsworth
Leadership Development Consultant and Educator, ATS. LLC



The Leadership Studies program at Our Lady of the Lake University gave me the precisely the leadership knowledge and skills I needed. The program took me to a whole new level, strengthening my abilities to take on greater leadership roles and to actively mentor others. As a leadership practitioner, I appreciate how well the program complements and expands my leadership consulting, coaching, and training and development activities. In my university roles, the Leadership Studies program and research component has transformed me into an effective scholar ready for additional significant activities in academia.



PhD in Leadership Studies
Spring 2022 Graduates' Testimonials

Dr. Samantha Ruiz
Community Relations Coordinator, Southwest ISD



The leadership program at OLLU has helped me discover my passion for leadership. The program has also prepared me to become a successful leadership scholar in many ways. It taught me many useful theories that can be applied in real world experiences. Leadership is an important quality to have. I am successfully prepared to continue my leadership journey, both in research and in the workplace.

Dr. Cisco Iguaran
Director of Product Management, USAA



From the first day in the Leadership Studies program to my last this program has been a family. The Cohort structure introduces you to many different views of the working environment and the need for Leadership in many sectors including Non-Profit, Education, Military, Healthcare, and many more. The faculty and staff have a genuine interest in both teaching and learning from the students. I'm blessed to have made lifelong relationships and look forward to giving back to the University.



PhD in Leadership Studies
Spring 2022 Graduates' Testimonials

Dr. Crystal Bessix
President edOpp Solutions LLC



I am honored to be a graduate of the OLLU Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Leadership Studies program. When I first started, I did not anticipate the tremendous impact this program would have on myself, my life, and my company. I am more aware of the value and influence of leadership on people, organizations, communities, and our world. I am not only a more effective leader but also a better person. This journey is not for the faint at heart. It is truly an academically rigorous program that will challenge you, push you, and equip you to become a leadership practitioner and scholar. There were many late nights and long weekends, intense moments, and sometimes exhaustion getting to the finish line. But you will get there because of the support from the

esteemed faculty and Department Chair of the Leadership Studies Program. Their passion for leadership, enthusiasm for teaching, and dedication to you as a student will inspire you and make you accountable for reaching the finish line.

Dr. Erica Villarreal
Director, Educator Preparation and Accountability, UTRGV



For as long as I can remember, I have always had a passion for education and for helping others. While I realize my experiences and challenges are not unique among my colleagues, they are unique among my family's dynamics, background, and foundations. The realization of my professional and educational accomplishments has surpassed familial expectations, set a standard for my children, and paved the way for future generations. The fulfillment of my academic achievements at Our Lady of the Lake has not only validated my purpose and principles but has also reinforced the self-realization of being able to provide others with guidance and fundamental leadership skills needed to realize their goals and aspirations.



OUR LADY OF THE LAKE UNIVERSITY

PhD in Leadership Studies Spring 2022 Graduates' Testimonials

Dr. Juan Quintanilla Business Process Consultant, ServiceNow



There is no experience like pursuing a doctoral degree and even better is the cohort model at Our Lady of the Lake University. The course curriculum and the professors are outstanding and the process from luminary, to candidacy, research, presentation, and graduation is practical and relevant in my everyday life. My experience throughout this process has taught me perseverance, determination, grit, and the will to overcome any obstacle, and many obstacles came my way. I lost my mother and father to COVID and contracted it myself. I was hospitalized, ventilated, intubated, on ECMO, fighting for my life. By the grace of Jesus Christ, prayers, and support from my wife, kids, family, and friends I survived. After 81 days I was taken home in a stretcher because of the atrophy, I could not stand or walk. Through it all, my cohort family and professors were encouraging me through the recovery and worked with me to never stop, never give up, never

fail. The determination and commitment from OLLU staff and professors are just as vigorous, if not more as the determination we have as students.



OUR LADY OF THE LAKE UNIVERSITY

PhD in Leadership Studies
Fall 2021 Graduates' Testimonials

Marna Murphy, PhD

Underwriting Adherence Advisor, USAA

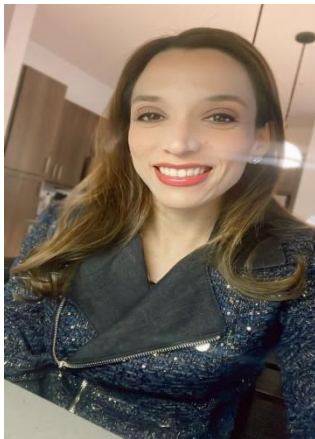


“Our Lady of the Lake University has given me a first-class education from exceptional educators! OLLU focuses on you as an individual, not as a number, making you feel like family while providing guidance and instruction. I appreciate the courteous autonomy in the classes, but mostly I am grateful for the inspirational learning that I have been able to take with me personally and professionally. My leadership studies have given me the confidence and motivation to feel more equipped to operate in the corporate environment.

I count myself blessed to have been able to receive my Master’s and PhD from an esteemed university like Our Lady of the Lake University.”

Denise Mont, PhD

Speech Language Pathologist, Regency Integrated Health Services



“Throughout the educational journey of pursuing my doctoral degree I have discovered a lot about myself and how I lead others. I have completed the doctoral program and established the essential groundwork for success in my future endeavors as a leader. The program has helped me further develop and fine tune the skills that are necessary for effective growth and development in the areas of self-reflection. The leadership skills I developed I was able to immediately apply within all aspects of the healthcare field I work in.”



OUR LADY OF THE LAKE UNIVERSITY

PhD in Leadership Studies
Fall 2021 Graduates' Testimonials

Charles McNeil, PhD

Business Education Instructor, Humble High School



“Through this journey I have definitely grown as a person, professional and scholar. This program has influenced the way I think, teach, motivate others and make decision. The Leadership Studies program provided me with much more than just increasing my interpersonal skills, enriching my leadership skills and knowledge, but it facilitated my personal transition from a student to a scholar. Additionally, Our Lady of the Lake University has definitely satisfied my thirst for knowledge through the esteemed Leadership Studies faculty and subsequently I have been inspired to motivate and satisfy the thirst for knowledge in my students.”

Jessica Todd, PhD

Principal, Brownsville ISD



“I was very apprehensive about starting a Ph.D. program, but now that I look back and reflect on my journey I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to learn and grow as a professional and as a leader. The leadership studies program at Our Lady of the Lake University has taught me some very important lessons but most of all has taught me the importance of balancing the things that I value most in life. I have learned so many conceptual leadership skills that I have been able to put into practice as a new elementary principal. I know that the skills and knowledge that I have gained in this program helped me excel in my interview and in what I do every day within my school community. I can make connections with what I found in the literature regarding leadership and what I found in my study and apply those concepts in the education field. I am confident that I can motivate my teachers and students to accomplish set goals, but most importantly build genuine relationships with them. I am grateful for the OLLU leadership program and the lifelong leadership and career skills that I have gained.”



OUR LADY OF THE LAKE UNIVERSITY

PhD in Leadership Studies
Fall 2021 Graduates' Testimonials

Larry Miller, PhD

Science Instructor, Brownsville ISD



“I recommend OLLU for students who are looking to build the foundations of becoming good leaders. OLLU taught me more than just leadership skills. They taught me how to be a better all-around person. The university gave me knowledge in dimensions I didn’t even know existed. The professors provide a lot of inspiration and insight on how to become a great leader. In addition, they designed interactive classroom environments where you can easily ask any questions. It was a fun and unforgettable experience. Leadership is one of the most prominent qualities I have developed, thanks to OLLU.”

Chris Victoria, PhD

HQ Installation Mission Support, USAF



“I did my PhD studies during what continues to be a really tumultuous time in America that has highlighted leadership as a scarce ability in our society at large. The concepts I learned over the past five years, the ability to scientifically analyze behavior across various situations, and understanding the complexities of the human condition that prevent us from enacting simple solutions has helped me form a paradigm to make sense of the nonsensical activities that is now our national reality. This program has armed me with a comprehensive understanding to diagnose where the leadership gaps exist from a principled perspective that I will use to build awareness as a catalyst for needed change if we are to get our great nation onto a path of productivity that benefits all and away from the divisiveness that is tearing us apart. I was a leader in application before starting this program and had a rudimentary understanding of leadership models for effective behavior; now I am a better rounded member of the leadership community that will contribute not just action but also education as I develop those who are desperately needed for the immediate and near future challenges that await our society.”



OUR LADY OF THE LAKE UNIVERSITY

PhD in Leadership Studies
Fall 2021 Graduates' Testimonials

Annette Guajardo-Goldberg, PhD

City Administrator, City of Arcola



“The Leadership Doctoral Program at Our Lady of the Lake has been such a great instrument to further my career. It has challenged me in ways that were previously unknown to me. I have developed from a supervisor management style to a servant leadership style. This program also increased my ability to present in public forums, promote better decision making, and build teams that have synergy. My career has grown in responsibility and increased leadership roles as I currently serve as City Administrator for the City of Arcola. In my role, I must direct the City in many facets and manage several projects. This program has helped me to understand the different nuances of leadership and the best way to better serve the needs of the City. During my challenges, I never felt alone or hopeless because the program gave me knowledge and insight into what leadership is on different levels. I am so grateful for all the professors who welcomed my many questions and challenges, helped me to compress issues into a focused delivery and for providing their knowledge and expertise.”

Denise Rios, PhD

Education Professional, Fort Bend ISD



“Our Lady of the Lake’s PhD program has given me new insight on leadership and its affects on communities and organizations. The dedicated teaching staff at OLLU has assisted me throughout the process of this program. The small class size and one to one instruction is unparalleled. I feel more confident as a leader having participated in this PhD program.”



OUR LADY OF THE LAKE UNIVERSITY

PhD in Leadership Studies
Fall 2021 Graduates' Testimonials

Frank Gonzalez, PhD

Senior Dir. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Money Mart Financial Services



“Words like process and commencement may describe the leadership journey. However, the leadership journey at OLLU really becomes “crescit eundo” or “it grows as it goes” and not a commencement (start) or process (steps toward an end). I initially thought I knew a lot about relationships and influence as the foundations for any leader. However, transforming into a practitioner and/or scholar means that you are never done learning or giving back to leadership. The program provided me skills in questioning and measuring evidence based leadership. I generally viewed motivation and outcomes as the outputs of leadership while relationships and influence remain the inputs. The inputs are always changing and growing. This journey is about growth. Never-ending growth. I am blessed to continue this journey. There are no beginnings or ends.”

Laura Hees, PhD

Human Resource Business Partner, HCA Healthcare



“Being a part of the Department of Leadership’s Doctoral program at OLLU has truly helped me define and articulate my personal, professional, social, and leadership skills. After my master’s degree in counseling, I knew I wanted to continue my education; however it was difficult for me to find a program that encompassed several areas in one. I chose OLLU because the leadership program encompasses business, education, and healthcare which are three of my main career experiences/interests. In the program, I have been lucky enough to challenge and enhance many skills while completing rigorous courses. With the support of amazing faculty, during this program I have been able to relocate cities, get married, honeymoon, begin a new career, and have 2 children while still graduating at the four year mark. I am extremely satisfied with this program and without a doubt I would recommend it to any of my friends, family, or colleagues.”

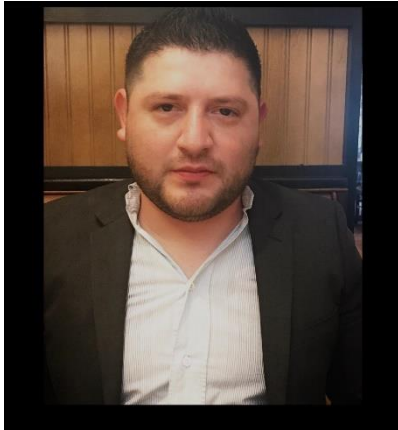


OUR LADY OF THE LAKE UNIVERSITY

PhD in Leadership Studies
Fall 2021 Graduates' Testimonials

Orlando Barajas, PhD

Small Business Owner, A.O.E.C. Contracting



"Our Lady of the Lake University and its Leadership Studies program has been instrumental inside and outside of the classroom. The multifaceted curriculum has transformed me and given me the confidence to pursue my future endeavors with total conviction."

Jabbar Stackston, PhD

Strategic Partner Enablement Manager US Cropsience division, Bayer



"The doctoral experience at OLLU has proven to be more than I expected. Before starting the program, I was not aware of the depth in which the field of leadership has been studied as well as has progressed. Within the rapidly changing global environment that exist today, the program has certainly provided a great basis and understanding of the leadership challenges that have and likely will continue to exist. Furthermore, the program has provided for great insight, research, and application of tools that will help in the leadership challenges ahead no matter whether it is academia, a business setting, or just everyday challenges. As a supplemental bonus to the gain of knowledge and practical application, my OLLU experience was also enhanced by meeting and working alongside some great faculty, new colleagues, and friends. I look forward to applying what I have learned in my current and future career endeavors."

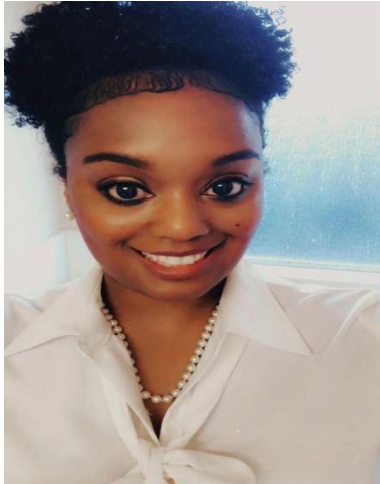


OUR LADY OF THE LAKE UNIVERSITY

PhD in Leadership Studies
Fall 2021 Graduates' Testimonials

Sharae Celestine, PhD

Sr. Research Analyst, APCQ



“My enrollment in Our Lady of the Lake’s Leadership Studies program has been nothing short of amazing. The insights that I have gain, the relationships that I have built, and the way my personal perspective has evolved throughout my time has been phenomenal. From mastering vital leadership concepts such as Resonance to challenging my previously held beliefs in courses such as Global Leadership, this program has enhanced my Organizational Leadership & Development practitioner skillsets in variety of ways. The faculty has challenged me in unimaginable ways that have all worked out for my good. I have no doubt that the obtainment of this degree will be my launching pad and the best is yet to come.”

Benito Moya, PhD

Operations Administrator, South Texas Health System Clinics



“The Leadership Studies program at OLLU-RGV campus has enhanced my personal and professional growth immensely. Stagnant in a position for 15 years with no merit increase or opportunity for advancement, I sought to develop my leadership skills and improve my future by enrolling in the doctorate program at OLLU. While in the program, I was able to acquire the valuable skills, techniques, and theories applicable to today’s workforce environment in healthcare. The personal, small cohort structure coupled with the experienced and motivational faculty helped me successfully complete the program and earn my PhD. Now I am in a leadership role for the largest healthcare system in the community and proud to say that I apply learned leadership skills daily. Undoubtedly, the OLLU Leadership Studies doctoral program can be a pivotal catalyst for future students wanting increased job satisfaction, personal growth, and skills development.”



OUR LADY OF THE LAKE UNIVERSITY

PhD in Leadership Studies
Fall 2021 Graduates' Testimonials

Tyra Williams, PhD

Education Administrator



"Completing this program cemented my desire to do more and give more by being more. I was challenged and forced to re-examine who I was as a person and a leader. The support that I received at Our Lady of the Lake University was overwhelming! I came in as a manager and I'm leaving as a well-rounded authentic leader with lots of work to do and many people to uplift!"

Santos Palomo, PhD

T-STEM Academy Director/Principal, La Joya Juarez Lincoln High School



"I am a proud graduate from Our Lady of the Lake University who earned a Ph.D. in Leadership Studies. I have to admit that when I began this program, I was terrified. Despite my fears, I became more inspired and motivated to accomplish this goal, which at one point seemed to be only a dream. Earning this doctoral degree was challenging, rigorous, and fun-filled with many experiential learning activities. This program is systematically aligned to help students prosper. It allowed me to discover my strengths and weaknesses; it made me more resilient, confident, self-aware, and prepared to succeed. As a Director/Principal, I have implemented the new learning with my teachers and staff. We have grown together. I know I am prepared and ready to flourish no matter what career path as a leader God leads me to. I am incredibly grateful for the bonds I formed with my professors and friends and the knowledge, strategies, skills, and experiences I acquired during this incredible journey. I am a Saint!"



OUR LADY OF THE LAKE UNIVERSITY

PhD in Leadership Studies
Fall 2021 Graduates' Testimonials

Eunice Garcia, PhD
Manager



"The academic growth at Our Lady of the Lake University certainly gave me a well-defined view to increasing my leadership skills. The journey was amazing because it inspired me to be authentic, passionate, and empower others to succeed. The program can heighten awareness of leadership behaviors that can immediately make a difference in working environments. In this rapid and ever-changing business market, it is vital to engage and build leader-follower solid relationships to have a successful project.

" In life, leave your footprint."

Joseph T. Cabell, PhD

Chief, Accreditation and Compliance, Defense Health Agency



"I received my Ph.D. on 13 August 2021. Currently, I am serving 131 Department of Defense Military Treatment Facilities. I firmly believe that earning a Ph.D. gives me an edge. My doctorate has been beneficial in expanding my expertise as a senior organizational leader. My time at OLLU prepared me for my current role, allowing me to manage data and information effectively, develop excellent verbal and written skills to communicate results, manage large interdisciplinary projects, analyze large data sets, conduct predictive modeling, knowledge creation, and defending my ideas. Earning a Ph.D. was very overwhelming initially; looking back at plans, research, and achievements, I appreciate that I can share my knowledge with a diverse group of people, push myself beyond my boundaries, and never stop. Lastly, the journey to earn a Ph.D. triggered my intrinsic motivation, commitment, and adaptability, which has helped me believe in my ideas and myself."



OUR LADY OF THE LAKE UNIVERSITY

PhD in Leadership Studies
Fall 2021 Graduates' Testimonials

Rosemary Alcoser, PhD

Cardiac/Vascular Sonographer, Heart and Vascular Institute of Texas



"The Leadership program at OLLUSA has many attributes and contributions to the success of this program. I now lead with a purpose to serve those in most need, and as a scholar, I can provide a much more meaningful platform of communication with the leadership tools, and applications that this program offers".

David DeBenedictis, PhD

Risk Analyst, Chevron



“With the help of great Professors from OLLU, I finally accomplished this long-term goal. The education I received is the epitome of a classical education one that develops the individual in a selected discipline and more importantly their spiritual path. It provided me with a deep understanding and appreciation for Leadership along with the humility to know that I have much more to learn. There is something more important: the VALUE of this education, the commitment of your Professors, their character, and the transformative aspect and the relevance of this education to you, your family and to our society. We learn in the manner of the old and authentic education based on ethics and eternal principles

where enlightenment of the mind and soul is essential and the idea of developing new sensibilities and humanness is a result suitable to the renaissance. In the next years, I will share my knowledge and help this world by adopting an elementary school in Guanacaste, Costa Rica. This "Escuelita" will be the focus of my attention until the children don't have to worry about what to eat, what to wear, and what to do after they finish elementary school.”



OUR LADY OF THE LAKE UNIVERSITY

PhD in Leadership Studies
Fall 2021 Graduates' Testimonials

Omar Ilsever, PHD

Vice President of Marketing & Sales, SAS



The PHD program at Our Lady of the Lake University gave me the opportunity to grow as a business leader, and as an academic scholar. Within a few short years, I was presenting papers and publishing in journals. I elevated my leadership knowledge while applying real life concepts as a working practitioner in my company. The professors made the courses incredibly fascinating and guided us diligently through this academic journey. The memories that have been created, and the knowledge obtained is forever engrained into me. I am very grateful that I took a leap of faith into this program. I got more out of it than I could have ever imagined!

Traci K Uribe, PHD

Director of Regulatory Management & Research, USAA



Receiving my Ph.D. from Our Lady of the Lake University has transformed me into an effective scholar and practitioner of leadership. Obtaining my leadership degree has not only allowed me to fulfill my educational desires but has also enabled me to apply what I learned through the program to important real-world life scenarios in the non-profit and corporate world. My degree has not only enhanced my career but also helped me enrich my experience as a professional. I have been able to learn and operationalize unique skills that are an integral part of my everyday job which helps me make a difference to the industry. I strongly believe that my doctoral degree is what has differentiated me from others and made me stand out among the hundreds of qualified candidates for different leadership opportunities within the industry. The greatest value of receiving my degree is the credibility and purpose it has given me in my profession, in my non-profit work, and in my personal life. It's a sense of accomplishment and personal growth which has enabled me to make valuable, meaningful connections. Completing my Doctoral journey is one of the greatest decisions I have ever made