Ruben Boling, DBA

Alpharetta, Georgia

Master of Business Administration
Georgia Institute of Technology

Doctor of Business Administration
Kennesaw State University

DBA Dissertation Title:
“An Examination of the Influence of Top Executives on Entrepreneurial Orientation”

Dissertation Committee:
Jeffrey G. Covin, PhD, Indiana University
Torsten Pieper, PhD, Kennesaw State University

Future Plans:
I will be continuing my career teaching, researching, and managing the Center for the Future of North Georgia at North Georgia College & State University.

Acknowledgments:
First, I thank my family for their love and support – You are best friends and biggest supporters. Joy, Matt and Daniel I love you. Although he is not here, Jeff your friendship and guidance go beyond measure. Torsten, you are a dear friend that listens and supports in such a way that you forced me to find my own way. It has truly been a pleasure working with you. Joe and Neal, thank you for all you have done for me and the Kennesaw DBA program. Without you all this would not have happened. I thank my now former boss, Max Burns. Best wishes as you begin your new journey. To my classmates - It has been a pleasure working and studying with you. I look forward to continuing our journeys together, even though we will be geographically separated.
Doug Boyle, DBA

Dalton, Pennsylvania

Executive Master of Business Administration – Columbia University

Doctor of Business Administration
Kennesaw State University

DBA Dissertation Title:
“The Effects of Internal Audit Report Type and Reporting Relationship on Internal Auditors’ Judgments”

Dissertation Committee:
Dana R. Hermanson, PhD, Kennesaw State University
F. Todd DeZoort, PhD, The University of Alabama

Future Plans:
In the next two years, I plan on securing tenure and becoming a department chair. Longer-term, I plan on becoming a dean. In addition, I will continue servicing on 3-5 boards and focus my consulting on board/audit committee training.

Acknowledgments:
I would like to acknowledge my fiancée Laura for always being most understanding, supportive, and strong. My daughters Emma and Sarah for being an ongoing source of inspiration and motivation. My parents for instilling in me my competitive drive, strong work ethic, and values. I want to thank all of the faculty and speakers who participated in the program. They are truly world class researchers, teachers, and outstanding people. I want to especially recognize Dr. Dana Hermanson for serving as my dissertation chair and being an outstanding mentor, research partner, and friend. In addition, thanks to Dr. Todd DeZoort, Dr. Neal Mero, Dr. Joe Hair, and Dr. Lance Brouthers. Finally, thanks to my outstanding colleagues in the program.
DBA Dissertation Title:
“Job Embeddedness: The Interaction Effects of Attitude, Personality, and Context on Performance”

Dissertation Committee:
Neal P. Mero, PhD, Kennesaw State University
Steve Werner, PhD, University of Houston

Future Plans:
Upon graduating from the DBA program, I will continue teaching at Kennesaw State University in the Department of Management and Entrepreneurship where I plan to pursue a tenure track position in the area of Organizational Behavior and Human Resources.

Acknowledgments:
To my mother, Mrs. Jean E. Greene, thank you for your encouragement and sacrifice. Throughout my life, you have been a constant source of support; always there for me regardless of the reason. Your quiet strength and unwavering love are but two things for which I am grateful. You are extremely special to me and I hope you know how much I love and appreciate you. Thank you for your patience. Thank you for your understanding. Thank you for being my mother.
Debbie Lasher, DBA

Marietta, Georgia

Master of Business Administration
Kennesaw State University

Doctor of Business Administration
Kennesaw State University

DBA Dissertation Title:
“Antecedents and Outcomes of the Investment in Internal Auditing and the Moderating Role of Family Business Culture”

Dissertation Committee:
Audrey Gramling, PhD, Kennesaw State University
Torsten Pieper, PhD, Kennesaw State University

Future Plans:
I am intrigued with new professional opportunities, including engagement in research and contributing to the accounting profession and academic leadership. I plan to remain in higher education in leadership and teaching roles.

Acknowledgments:
Many individuals played a part in my achieving this goal. Joe, for implementing your DBA vision at KSU and for answering statistical questions 24/7! Also, to Dale and yourself for all your hospitality. Neal, for leadership and dedication to delivering a quality program focused on student achievement. Audrey, for expertise, guidance, and wonderful e-mails including thoughts, feedback, a little humor, and a lot of encouragement. Torsten, for sharing your knowledge of family business research and patiently answering endless questions. Dana, for quality insights and suggestions to clarify and strengthen my research. Fellow Guinea Pigs, for a great bonding experience involving learning, support, and fun. My family, for always believing and cheering. And to my husband Harry, my love and deepest gratitude. You are my rock.
Jeananne Nicholls, DBA
McMurray, Pennsylvania

Master of Business Administration
Duquesne University

Doctor of Business Administration
Kennesaw State University

DBA Dissertation Title:
“The Drivers of Future Generosity Behavioral Intentions of College Service-Learning Experience Participants”

Dissertation Committee:
Steven White, PhD, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
Jill Maher, PhD, Robert Morris University

Future Plans:
In the fall I start at Slippery Rock University as a tenure-track Associate Professor. I hope to help SRU become ACBSP and AACSB accredited. I anticipate teaching in the new MBA program.

Acknowledgments:
First and foremost, thank God. I pursued a doctorate because Dr. Matt Marlin believed in me long before I believed in myself. I value my committee's unwavering encouragement and resolve. My daughters have been, and now my granddaughters will be, the reason I am willing to set and achieve goals and push myself. I feel blessed with a husband who is both my foundation and my inspiration...and the love of my life. I am grateful for the determination instilled in me by my parents and for the love and life-long support of family and friends. I appreciate the behind the scenes efforts of KSU's administrators, but especially the hard work of Susan Cochran, Dr. Neal Mero, and my mentor Dr. Joe Hair. I also have a new hero...Dr. Marko Sarstedt, danke shoen mein freund. Finally, my classmates enriched my academic experience and will be lifelong friends.
DBA Dissertation Title:
“Extended Stakeholder Orientation: Influence on Innovation Orientation and firm Performance”

Dissertation Committee:
Joseph F. Hair, Jr., PhD, Kennesaw State University
Torsten Pieper, PhD, Kennesaw State University

Future Plans:
My plan is to teach based on the synergy of my experience and academic background. I expect to take a faculty position and combine that with designing practitioner oriented seminars. My dream is to take packaged seminars with experts in individual disciplines global, especially in emerging and developing countries, Fiji Islands among them. I hope to do this with the many accomplished academicians and colleagues I have come to know over the years. To be ambitious is to accomplish I have learned, so I want to continue to publish regularly both in academic and practitioner oriented journals.

Acknowledgments:
I want to extend many thanks to my family for their unstinting support – my wife, Bhanu, my daughter, Dr. Gitanjali Patel, and my son, Krishan Patel. Professor Hair and Mrs. Hair made this journey so much more possible and pleasant. Professors Mero and Pieper were always supportive and helpful. Many Kennesaw faculty and staff, and visiting scholars, contributed generously to my work. Thank you, all.
Charlie Ragland, DBA

Signal Mountain, Tennessee

Master of Business Administration
Case Western Reserve University

Doctor of Business Administration
Kennesaw State University

DBA Dissertation Title:
“Institutional Theory and Cross National Differences in International Market Selection for Direct Selling”

Dissertation Committee:
Scott Widmier, PhD, Kennesaw State University
Tom Baker, PhD, Clemson University

Future Plans:
I have accepted a new appointment of Assistant Professor of Marketing in the Edward H. Schmidt School of Professional Sales, College of Business & Innovation, at The University of Toledo.

Acknowledgments:
I would like to recognize those that inspired and supported the DBA journey: Joe Hair, Lance Brouthers, and Neal Mero for the creative energy, vision, and determination necessary to launch the DBA program; Scott Widmier, Tom Baker, and Brian Rutherford for their support during the dissertation process; Susan Cochran for keeping everyone in line; and my DBA cohort for their camaraderie and encouragement. Lastly and most importantly, I would like to thank my family – Maureen, C.B., Connor, and Christopher. Without their motivation, support, and sacrifice the pursuit of the doctoral degree would not have been possible.
Anne Wilkins, DBA

Ooltewah, Tennessee

Master of Accountancy
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Doctor of Business Administration
Kennesaw State University

DBA Dissertation Title:
Two Essays on “How Perceptions of Fairness and Influences of Social Capital and Source Credibility Matter To Compensation Committees and Investors”

Dissertation Committee:
Dana R. Hermanson, PhD, Kennesaw State University
Jeffrey Cohen, PhD, Boston College

Future Plans:
I obtained an accounting faculty position at Middle Tennessee State University.

Acknowledgments:
I would especially like to acknowledge my dissertation chair, Dr. Dana Hermanson, for his guidance and encouragement during this process. He was not only a research mentor but provided career and publishing advice and assistance. I am blessed to have had the opportunity to work with him as well as the other members of my committee, Dr. Jeffrey Cohen and Dr. Audrey Gramling. In addition, Dr. Joe Hair, our extremely accomplished statistician and program founder, deserves special thanks as well as Dr. Neal Mero, who among other accomplishments administratively guided this very special program. Of course, I would like to thank my fellow cohorts for their support and encouragement. Most importantly, I am very thankful for my family, my husband, Jim Ledbetter, son, Alan Ledbetter, and daughter, Catherine Ledbetter for their unwavering belief in me.
History of the Program

The Kennesaw State DBA program prepares highly experienced professionals for research and teaching positions in business education or for prominent leadership positions in their professional community.

In 2005, a faculty team led by program founder, Dr. Joe Hair, designed a program, curriculum, and structure to create an intensive program of scholarly preparation that accommodates the demanding schedules of senior professionals from business and education.

The DBA degree was approved by the Board of Regents in March 2008. In May of 2008, Dr. Neal Mero was selected as the founding director of the DBA and was joined by Dr. Hair and Dr. Lance Brouthers as the initial DBA core faculty to prepare for the launch of the program. This team, joined by KSU and top global scholars, collaborated to launch the program in May of 2009.

Seventeen students comprised the inaugural DBA class. On January 6, 2012, Anne Wilkins and Ruben Boling defended their dissertations to become the first students to complete the program. They are joined by six of their fellow classmates to become the first graduating class of the Coles DBA on May 8, 2012. Other members of Cohort 1 will join them in subsequent graduation ceremonies.

Kennesaw State University | Coles College of Business
Doctor of Business Administration

Cohort 1 with Joe Hair, DBA Founder & Senior Scholar
First Row: Joie Hain, Debbie Lasher, Joe Hair, Vijay Patel, Earl Howell, Juanne Greene
Second Row: Charlie Ragland, Anne Wilkins, Ted Randall, Jeananne Nicholls, John Riggs, Vic Marshall, Alvin Miles, Laurie Hodge, Russell Reams, Jerry Kudlats