

22nd Annual Doctoral Research Symposium Mar 7, 2026

Welcome!

For many years, the research symposium has been the scholarly event of the doctoral programs in business and education. This is a chance to explore, question, and grow a further appreciation of the work being done by students and guided by faculty.

We are also pleased to offer professional academic workshops by faculty and staff and a keynote, a distinguished panel of faculty and current students sharing their stories about the value of the education they have received. This work crosses fields of business leadership and knowledge, and highlights how these programs - enriched by the Lasallian Catholic tradition - are continuing to develop students dedicated to ethical lives of service and leadership.

After several years of maintaining our community of inquiry, it is wonderful to also gather once again. Take advantage of these networking opportunities to introduce yourself to someone new.

Welcome to the symposium.


Paul E. Kotz, Ph.D. - Director of Doctorate of Business Administration and Professor of Doctorate of Education in Leadership

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2026 Schedule

8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. Check-in Registration - Lobby
Continental Breakfast - Ballroom East

9:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. Program Director Welcome - Ballroom East - Dr. Paul Kotz

9:35 a.m. - 10:15 a.m. Anchor Keynote Session - Mr. Jazz Hampton, Esq - CEO and General Counsel at TurnSignl

10:20 a.m. -10:50 a.m. Workshops: Mary Jacobs - Associate Dean of the School of Business- Starting a Consulting Business - Things to Think About - Ballroom East
In Poster Sessions - Ballroom West

11:00 a.m. -11:45 a.m. Breakout Session 1: 45-minute Student Presentations - Banquet West and Ballroom East
In-Person Poster Sessions Ballroom West

12:00 p.m. -12:20 p.m. Lunch - Ballroom East

12:20 p.m. - 1:20 p.m. Faculty Panel and Q & A

1:30 p.m. - 2:15 p.m. Breakout Session 2: 45-minute Student Presentations - Banquet West and Ballroom East

2:30 p.m. - 2:45 p.m. Final Thoughts: Gifts & Raffle

Our Keynote Speaker:


Jazz Hampton, Esq.

Jazz Hampton is the CEO and General Counsel of TurnSignl, a Minnesota based technology company that provides real time legal guidance to drivers and individuals during traffic stops, accidents, and immigration related encounters, while securely recording those interactions. He is also an Adjunct Professor of Entrepreneurial Finance at the University of St. Thomas Opus College of Business, where he teaches the next generation of founders how to build and finance mission driven companies.

A passionate advocate for justice, equity, and mentorship, Jazz serves on the Boards of the Minneapolis Foundation, Catholic Charities Twin Cities, and the Great North Innocence Project. He has represented wrongfully incarcerated individuals fighting to prove their innocence and continues to mentor aspiring professionals through multiple mentorship programs across Minnesota.

In 2025, Jazz ran for Mayor of Minneapolis, bringing a platform centered on public safety, economic vitality, climate leadership, and civil rights. His campaign deepened his commitment to public service and broadened his work as a civic leader focused on building bridges across communities and advancing practical, people first solutions for the city's future.

Before founding TurnSignl, Jazz was the Director of Diversity and Inclusion and a practicing attorney at Foley and Mansfield, a national law firm. He has been featured on NBC Nightly News with Lester Holt, MSNBC, and CBS, and was named one of Minneapolis St. Paul's 40 Under 40 for his leadership and community impact.

Our Presenters:

Morning Presenters:


Dr. Paul Adejuyigbe DBA, PMP

A Quantitative Analysis of the Relationship Between Student Loan Debt Ratio and Financial Stress Among University Graduates With Over Ten Years of Repayment in the USA: A look at how the burden of student loan debt in the United States has become a significant economic and social concern, particularly among graduate debtors who have been repaying their loans for over a decade.


Dr. Renee Thompson, DBA, MBA

Preserving Land and Legacy: An Ethnography Examination of Farm Succession Planning: This dissertation presentation examines the complex and often underexplored dynamics of succession planning in multi-generational family farms, with particular attention to Century Farms in the Upper Midwest. While much of the existing literature emphasizes legal structures and financial instruments, this research argues that successful succession depends equally on human, cultural, and relational factors that are frequently overlooked.

Afternoon Presenter:


Dr. Destiny Hastings, MBA, Ed.D

The Lived Experience of Millennial HR Professionals in Iowa During the Covid-19 Pandemic:
The purpose of this dissertation was to understand how millennial and baby boomer human resources professionals experienced the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, the study sought to capture the experience of changing from working in the office full-time to working remotely full-time. This hermeneutical phenomenological study investigated the question, "What is the lived

experience of millennial and baby boomer human resources professionals working remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic?"

Poster Sessions:

Damaris Ng'aya: *Exploring the Relationship between Corporate Governance, Corporate Social Responsibility and Reputation Risk for Large Financial Institutions in the United States:*The research investigates the potential relationship between Corporate Governance, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and Reputation Risk for Large firms in the financial sector in the United States. The main objective of the study is to examine whether the financial data of large companies can be correlated with the data in their non-financial reports and provide information on the level of corporate governance and corporate responsibility and to examine the correlation between them.

Ofem Ofem: *Governing the Algorithmic Colleague:* They will be presenting their research, which centers on developing "A Multi-Theoretical Framework for Board Oversight of Agentic AI Across Organizational Contexts"

Rodah Rutoh:*Assessing Challenges and Developing Sustainable Solutions for Maternal and Child Healthcare Services in Bomet County, Kenya:* This presentation will look at the main problems affecting maternal and child healthcare (MCH) in Bomet County, Kenya, and discusses practical ways to improve these services. It will focus on real issues that mothers and children face, such as long distances to health facilities, lack of enough trained health workers, limited medical supplies, and cultural or financial barriers that make it hard for families to get the care they need.

Saeid Moshtaghi: *Profitability in Iranian English Language Institutions:* Exploring marketing, branding, and entrepreneurial strategies to help Iranian private English language institutions acquire maximum profitability

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Meet the DBA Team


Mary Jacobs:
Mary Jacobs, MA, is Associate Dean of Graduate Programs and MBA Program Director at Saint Mary's University, with over a decade of higher education leadership, prior sales leadership

experience at Northwest/Delta Air Lines, and nearly 20 years of experience mentoring and supporting women entrepreneurs.

Raj Beekie:
Dr. Raj Beekie is a Guyana-born educator and consultant with a doctorate in Organization Development, over 25 years of experience in education and business, and a current faculty role in Saint Mary's University's DBA program, specializing in organizational development, leadership, strategic governance, emotional intelligence, and diversity education.

Antar Salim:
Dr. Antar Salim has taught at SMUMN for more than 10 years. He is on a mission to discover and establish learning environments that foster engagement and curiosity. Antar's belief that all students can learn shines through in any conversation with him.

Don Kessyer:
Dr. Don Keysser is a professor in the DBA and MBA programs at Saint Mary's and also a senior lecturer at the Carlson School of Management, University of Minnesota. His focus is primarily on finance, analysis, and management. He is also the Managing Director of Hannover Consulting

Phoebe Worthley:
Phoebe is a Program Coordinator for the DBA at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota. She brings a background in communications, marketing, and higher education administration to support multiple graduate and doctoral programs.

Renee Thompson:
Dr. Renee holds an MBA and DBA from Saint Mary's. She is a business leader and scholar with expertise in organizational leadership, strategy, and management. She is combining professional practice with doctoral-level research to drive effective and ethical organizational performance.

Divine Arpellet:
Dr. Divine Arpellet, DBA, PMP, is an economist, a SMUMN alum, an adjunct professor, and founder and Chief Economist of Globally Interconnected, leveraging over 15 years of global finance leadership and doctoral research to advance equitable international trade and educate future leaders in economics and business.


Dr. Nate Titman:

Dr. Nathan Titman holds a Ph.D. in American Studies from the University of Iowa. He has served as a Writing Consultant at Saint Mary's University since 2022, and teaches academic research and writing in several graduate programs.