

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT TYLER

**HUMAN RESOURCE
DEVELOPMENT AND
ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE**

**PH.D. PROGRAM
AMBASSADORS**



UTTyler **SOULES**
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS



CHRISTINA HUNTZE

2ND YEAR PHD STUDENT

TEXARKANA, TX

Thinking about joining us?

I'm happy to answer your questions.

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<https://www.linkedin.com/in/christina-huntze-6837a7b1>

PROFILE

I'm Christina Huntze, a doctoral student with over 15 years of experience in human resources and organizational leadership. Throughout my career, I've led workforce initiatives, supported employee development, and championed transformational leadership in both corporate and nonprofit environments. Currently, I serve in the nonprofit sector, where I'm passionate about exploring how Human Resource Development (HRD) can empower families in crisis and create pathways from crisis to career. My research focuses on adult development, literacy, and the role of HRD in breaking cycles of poverty.

I bring a practitioner's perspective to my academic journey and am committed to bridging research with real-world impact.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies -
Western Kentucky University,

Master of Science - Curriculum &
Instruction, Texas A & M University -
Texarkana

CURRENT POSITION

County Coordinator, Ground Floor Collective

WHY I CHOSE UT TYLER?

I chose the HRD PhD program at UT Tyler after doing many months of research. As a full-time working professional, the hybrid model allows me to complete assigned work on a flexible schedule while also encouraging strong connections to faculty and classmates.

FUN FACT

I have always been a non-traditional student, receiving my Bachelors degree at the age of 41 and my Masters at the age of 47. My plan is to finish the HRD PhD program by the age of 60.



COBY DILLARD

2ND YEAR PHD STUDENT

TYLER, TX

Thinking about joining us?

I'm happy to answer your questions.

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<https://www.linkedin.com/in/cwdillard/>

PROFILE

Coby Dillard is both a PhD student in Human Resource Development and the Director of Military and Veterans Affairs at the University of Texas at Tyler, where he leads efforts to support student veterans, service members, and their families. As a Navy veteran, Coby's work focuses on improving the academic experience for military-affiliated students. His career in higher education began in 2010 at Tidewater Community College in Virginia, where he held various roles supporting military students, before continuing his work at Regent University and UC Santa Barbara. Coby is a certified Clinical Military Counselor and a graduate of Leadership Tyler Class 37, with active memberships in the Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, and Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.

EDUCATION

Tidewater Community College (2012; AS),
Norfolk State University (2015; BS),
Regent University (2017; MA)

CURRENT POSITION

Director, Military & Veterans Affairs (UT Tyler)

WHY I CHOSE UT TYLER?

I chose UT Tyler for the challenge presented by both the HRD program and its faculty. Coming from both a military and counseling background, going into the field of human resource development presented the opportunity to build on my skills as an interdisciplinary researcher. My research interest involves examining the behaviors of military affiliated individuals within organizations, and how those behaviors influence their retention.

FUN FACT

I am probably one of the campus' biggest soccer fans! My "fun" research interest is the intersection of soccer, leadership, and organizational change.



KISHON JOSEPH

2ND YEAR PHD STUDENT
HOUSTON, TX

Thinking about joining us?
I'm happy to answer your questions.

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<https://www.linkedin.com/in/kishon-joseph-maiop-113096213>

PROFILE

Pursuing my PhD in Human Resource Development is both a professional and personal milestone. Throughout my career in healthcare, nonprofit, and corporate settings, I have seen how investing in people creates lasting impact for organizations and communities. This program gives me the opportunity to grow as a scholar and leader while learning alongside peers who share a passion for development and change. I am grateful for the chance to continue learning while also expanding my perspective and strengthening my ability to support the growth of others. For me, this journey is about growth, connection, and building a foundation to make a lasting impact.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Psychology, University of Houston

Master of Arts in Industrial/Organizational Psychology, University of Houston-Clear Lake

CURRENT POSITION

Talent & Engagement Program Specialist

WHY I CHOSE UT TYLER?

I chose the UT Tyler Ph.D. in HRD program for its focus on Organizational Development and Change. The hybrid format gives me the flexibility to balance work, school, and personal commitments while still engaging in collaborative learning experiences with top HRD faculty. I wanted to add that I have really good top HRD faculty.

FUN FACT

I'm on an "Around the World" food tour, exploring a new global cuisine every month in my local city.



UTTyler SOULES
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS



ALMA ROBLES

PHD CANDIDATE

HOUSTON, TX

Thinking about joining us?
I'm happy to answer your questions.

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PROFILE

This PhD program holds immense significance for me as I've personally observed the critical role Human Resource Development plays in every workplace. My objective is to make a meaningful contribution to this field by conducting research, publishing findings, teaching, and collaborating with organizations to elucidate the advantages of fostering growth through employee development.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts, Philosophy, University of Houston-Downtown

Master of Business Administration, University of Houston-Downtown

CURRENT POSITION

I work as a specialist in change management and communication within the IT department of the oil and gas industry.

WHY I CHOSE UT TYLER?

As I explored my passion for transforming employees within the workplace, I stumbled upon UT Tyler's PhD program in HR Development within the Soules College of Business. I was determined to become a part of this exceptional and distinctive curriculum. The program's affiliation with the College of Business beautifully complements my previous graduate degree in business and enables me to merge the realms of business and HRD from a unique business-oriented perspective.

FUN FACT

My family has a strong artistic background, with talents including singing, dancing, acting, and playing instruments. I, myself, practiced ballet for two years and have a passion for singing.



RAMIRO PESINA

PHD CANDIDATE

HOUSTON, TX

Thinking about joining us?
I'm happy to answer your questions.

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PROFILE

From humble beginnings, my life has been defined by resilience, hard work, and a commitment to growth. My father, a war refugee from Lebanon, and my mother, who left high school to raise me, instilled values of perseverance and lifelong learning. Their sacrifices shaped my approach to challenges and opportunities. My passion for HRD reflects my desire to nurture others and create positive impacts. This dedication extends to my family. My wife is also pursuing a doctoral degree while working as a school administrator. Together, we demonstrate that success and fulfillment come from a blend of hard work, family support, and a commitment to growth.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science Southeastern Oklahoma State University
Master of Business Administration Southeastern Oklahoma State University
Master of Science Southeastern Oklahoma State University.

CURRENT POSITION

Director of Environmental Safety, Health, and Sustainability at Emerson Electric. In this role, I lead global initiatives to ensure safe, sustainable practices and navigate complex regulations.

WHY I CHOSE UT TYLER?

UT Tyler is a distinguished member of the University of Texas system. Designed for ambitious professionals, the HRD program combines top-tier faculty with a flexible weekend schedule, ensuring you advance your career while maintaining your work commitments. Renowned for its rigorous curriculum, UT Tyler's doctoral program challenges even the most experienced practitioners, fostering unparalleled growth and development.

FUN FACT

I have a small hobby farm 'where I go to relax for "tractor time".





J.R. GODWIN

2ND YEAR PHD STUDENT
WHITEHOUSE, TX

Thinking about joining us?
I'm happy to answer your questions.

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<https://www.linkedin.com/in/j-r-godwin-3969692aa/>

PROFILE

My name is J.R. Godwin, and I am a PhD student in Human Resource Development at UT Tyler. I have a background in public education as a teacher and coach and currently serve as the HR Manager for a large orthopedic practice. My research interests focus on leadership development, adult learning, and the integration of artificial intelligence in HR practices. I am passionate about using research to create practical solutions that help organizations grow and support their people. As a PhD Ambassador, I look forward to encouraging and connecting with others who are exploring the doctoral journey in HRD.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology, The University of Texas at Tyler

Master of Business Administration (MBA), Capella University

CURRENT POSITION

I serve as the HR Manager at Azalea Orthopedics, overseeing onboarding, employee relations, training, compliance, and payroll. I partner with leadership to coach managers, support staff development, and implement HR strategies across a fast-paced, multi-site healthcare environment.

WHY I CHOSE UT TYLER?

I chose UT Tyler's PhD program in Human Resource Development because Tyler is home to me. As a lifelong resident and UT Tyler undergraduate alum, I value the university's supportive environment. The executive weekend format allows me to balance work, family, and school.

FUN FACT

I fought MMA in my early twenties. Was a former High School Wrestling coach



TERASITA COWAN

PHD CANDIDATE

TULSA, OK

Thinking about joining us?
I'm happy to answer your questions.

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www.linkedin.com/in/terasita-c-b44b019

PROFILE

Terasita Cowan is a benefits leader and HRD scholar focused on building healthy, high-performing workplaces. She serves as Benefits Manager for Muscogee (Creek) Nation Gaming Enterprises, supporting ~1,900 employees across nine casinos, and holds SHRM-CP/PHR credentials. As Vice President of DEI for the Tulsa Area Human Resources Association, she advances inclusive talent practices and community partnerships. Terasita is pursuing the PhD in Human Resource Development at UT Tyler, where the cohort-based, hybrid format complements her leadership role. Her research examines organizational health, job stress, and work intentions—especially in high-pressure service environments—using rigorous quantitative methods (SEM). She is passionate about translating evidence into practical solutions that strengthen well-being, retention, and performance

EDUCATION

Oklahoma City University - BS in Business

Northeastern State University - MBA,

Southeastern Oklahoma State University -M.ed

CURRENT POSITION

Benefit Manager- MNGE, TAHRA-VP/DEI,
OKNAHRA-Cofounder and board Treasurer

WHY I CHOSE UT TYLER?

I chose UT Tyler's PhD in HRD because its advanced-research focus, OD/change lens, and strategic management perspective directly align with my goal to produce rigorous, applied scholarship on organizational health, job stress, and work intentions. The executive, cohort-based model and hybrid schedule—intensive on-campus sessions paired with online, project-driven work—fit my leadership role while providing the mentorship, methods depth, and peer community I need to contribute meaningfully to HRD

FUN FACT

I married my high school crush!





BRANDY DIAL

PHD CANDIDATE

TYLER, TX

Thinking about joining us?
I'm happy to answer your questions.

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PROFILE

I have always been driven by a deep curiosity to observe my environment and understand how to create efficient, harmonious work systems. This passion led me to pursue a master's in I/O Psychology, where I honed my skills as an HRD researcher and practitioner. I've had the privilege of working with remarkable leadership at national headquarters such as Morgan Stanley and Ricoh. After spending several rewarding years raising my beautiful daughters and engaging in non-profit and consulting projects, I embarked on this exciting journey at UT Tyler. This chapter is not just honing my skills and learning new ones but also forging lasting relationships and creating memories. I am eager for the opportunities and meaningful work that await once my studies are complete.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, University of South Alabama

Master of Arts in Industrial/Organizational Psychology, University of West Florida

CURRENT POSITION

OD Consultant, Mom, and Teacher Assistant

WHY I CHOSE UT TYLER?

I chose UT Tyler not only because it's conveniently located in my hometown but also for its engaging in-person class format, which fosters a rich learning environment. The program's exceptional tracks in Organizational Development and Statistics were particularly appealing, as they align perfectly with my academic and professional goals. Moreover, the opportunity to learn from professors who bring extensive real-world experience to the classroom was a key factor in my decision.

FUN FACT

I am an only child who married an only child, and we have been together for 20 years



KELECHI MMUOBUIKE

PHD CANDIDATE

TYLER, TX

Thinking about joining us?
I'm happy to answer your questions.

@ Kmmuobuike@patriots.uttyler.edu

PROFILE

I grew up in a home where lifelong learning was highly valued and instilled in members of my family. Even as a high school student, I knew I wanted to go into academia. I am passionate about teaching, conducting research, publishing, and contributing to the field of HRD. Getting accepted to the Ph.D. in Human Resource Development here at UT Tyler takes me closer to this goal. I am thankful for the opportunity to learn from incredibly talented faculty members, ready to share their wealth of experience and guide each student. It is a long road ahead, but with my spouse's support and my kids' motivation, I am committed to tackling whatever hurdle I face.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Education & Economics, University of Nigeria, NSUKKA

Master of Business Administration (MBA),
University of Texas at Tyler

Master of Science in Industrial Management,
University of Texas at Tyler

CURRENT POSITION

I am a Teaching Assistant and also serve as the president of SSHRD.

WHY I CHOSE UT TYLER?

The program is structured in a way that allows students to find a balance between academic work, career, and personal life without compromising the quality of information and knowledge delivered. Additionally, this program offers highly competitive tuition and scholarship opportunities.

FUN FACT

I love taking long walks and enjoy trying new baking and cooking recipes.



TIM MURPHY

PHD CANDIDATE

DALLAS, TX

Thinking about joining us?

I'm happy to answer your questions.

@ tmurphy10@patriots.uttyler.edu

PROFILE

I am very proud to be a PhD student in the Human Resource Development program at UT Tyler. I am grateful to be a part of this rigorous hybrid program that allows me to continue working while earning my degree with the support of a cohesive cohort group!

When I'm not working or studying, I enjoy laughing with family and friends, developing my pottery throwing skills, piddling in the garden, and binging foreign dramas.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts, Elementary Education (Minor Medieval History), Whitworth University

Master of Business Administration, Human Resources, Louisiana State University-Shreveport

CURRENT POSITION

I am currently an Undergraduate Medical Education Program Administrator at Baylor, Scott & White Health in association with Texas A&M University Medical School. I oversee the coursework and clinical experiences in Family Medicine, the Intensive Care Units, and several Internal Medicine subspecialties.

WHY I CHOSE UT TYLER?

I chose the HRD PhD program at UT Tyler because of the program's reputation for being a leader in Human Resource Development. As a training and development practitioner, I want to transform research-based innovations and advancements into action in the hospital and university's medical education programs.

FUN FACT

I am a registered yoga teacher and certified meditation teacher that loves guiding regular practices for a very dedicated group of senior citizens that know how to laugh and have fun!



AISHA A. ANDERSON
2ND YEAR PHD STUDENT
DALLAS, TX

Thinking about joining us?
I'm happy to answer your questions.

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<https://www.linkedin.com/in/aisha-a-anderson-mahrd-phr-224386205/>

PROFILE

I live by a few practices and mottos. The nine attitudes of mindfulness to cultivate the soul. I believe that "to whom much is given, much is expected," and "the better the question, the better the answer, the better the world works."

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Business Administration
(BBA), Howard University

Master of Arts in Human Resource
Development (MAHRD), Bowie State
University

CURRENT POSITION

Experience Manager

WHY I CHOSE UT TYLER?

One of the best PhD HRD programs in the nation with world-renowned faculty and researchers.

FUN FACT

I am a 400-hour certified yoga instructor



KELLY MOORE

PHD CANDIDATE

LONGVIEW, TX

Thinking about joining us?
I'm happy to answer your questions.

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PROFILE

Throughout my HRD master's journey at UT Tyler, I discovered the remarkable level of support and dedication that the faculty exhibited toward ensuring students' success. I felt a deep sense of honor upon my acceptance into the HRD Ph.D. program. The Ph.D. cohort approach is phenomenal and really sets UT Tyler apart from other institutions.

During my free time, I enjoy bass fishing, SCUBA diving, or just spending time with my family and friends. My spouse of 30+ years, our 2 Pomeranians and I reside in Longview, Texas and I am a lifelong Texan.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Industrial Technology, Southern Illinois University

Master of Science in Human Resource Development, The University of Texas at Tyler

CURRENT POSITION

I am a full-time student, caregiver to my mother-in-law, homemaker, and therapy dog mom.

WHY I CHOSE UT TYLER?

I chose the HRD PhD program at UT Tyler because of my experience with the professors in the HRD master's program. As an organizational development professional, I want to take the researching skills I am learning into my professional role, demonstrating how to make strategic decisions based on data.

FUN FACT

When I was younger and invincible, I loved to white-water raft in Colorado. On one of the Colorado vacations, I did a solo sky dive from 13,000 feet above the Colorado mountains.

I plan on being the first HRD Ph.D. graduate from UT Tyler that has a deep Southern drawl.



WESLEY B. WILSON

PHD CANDIDATE

LUFKIN, TX

Thinking about joining us?
I'm happy to answer your questions.

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<https://www.linkedin.com/in/wesleybwilson/>

PROFILE

I am excited to pursue my PhD in HR Development at UT Tyler. I am grateful for the opportunity to capitalize on my industry experience while learning from highly respected faculty in the academic field of HRD. My transition to scholar from practitioner is already noticeably underway. Since the first semester of my first year, I have been gaining advanced knowledge of statistics, notable skills in scholarly writing, and a stronger academic appreciation for the field of HRD. Balancing professional work, coursework, and personal/family time is certainly not without its challenges, but I find with proper planning and commitment the balance is achievable. With a home in Houston and a working cattle ranch outside Lufkin, I'm just as at home in the theatre as in the pasture.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science, Business
(Accounting Concentration), Penn State
University

Master of Business Administration, Texas
A&M University – Corpus Christi

CURRENT POSITION

Adjunct Instructor. Founder and leader of a real estate sales and investment firm.

WHY I CHOSE UT TYLER?

I chose the the PhD program in HR Development at UT Tyler because of the prominence and regard of the faculty within the field. While the non-traditional schedule of the program is convenient, I have a greater appreciation for the fact that rigor and discipline of the program produces recognizable, quality degrees.

FUN FACT

I attended nearly 20 schools before graduating high-school (and no, my family wasn't military).





PETER-JAMES (PJ) EHIMIKA
PHD CANDIDATE
EDINBURG, TX

Thinking about joining us?
I'm happy to answer your questions.

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PROFILE

My name is Peter-James (PJ) Ehimika and I am a second-year doctoral student in the HRD PhD program. At my home institution, I foster student success initiatives and help find solutions to complex student issues for the university. I really enjoy the doctoral program and have had great experiences with the coursework. The faculty is always there to provide you support and guidance, as are your colleagues. My research interests include men's health/mental health and well-being, employee health engagement, and health services delivery and training. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions, as I will be happy to help support you.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Biology,

Master of Arts in Communication, Master of Business Administration

CURRENT POSITION

Director of Student Success Initiatives.

WHY I CHOSE UT TYLER?

I selected UT Tyler due to its strong Human Resource Development program. The UT Tyler HRD faculty is very well respected within the field and the coursework helps you develop skills that will help you succeed as a scholar or a practitioner.

FUN FACT

I love to travel.



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