

2026 USA/Canada Northeast Regional Meeting

Thinking Beyond 2026: Shaping the Next Era of Executive Education



MEETING AGENDA

March 24–26, 2026

Bennett S. LeBow College of Business, Drexel University

DAY 1 – TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2026

2:00 PM –
5:00 PM

EMBAC Foundations Program

Location: Gerri C. LeBow Hall, 12th Floor Conference Room
3220 Market St., Philadelphia, PA 19104

Designed for professionals with fewer than three years of experience in executive or working professional master's degree programs, and/or those new to EMBAC, this introductory workshop provides practical grounding in the executive education landscape and the EMBAC community.

Scheduled Presenters:

- **Michael Desiderio**, EMBAC Executive Director
- **Mark Dierkes**, Director of Recruitment for Executive Programs, Drexel University's LeBow College of Business
- **Catherine Molony**, Director, Wharton MBA Program for Executives, The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania
- **Jana McQuaid**, Associate Dean, Academic Programs and Student Success, Virginia Commonwealth University School of Business
- **Francis Petit**, Associate Dean and EMBA Program Director, Fordham University's Gabelli School of Business
- **Jerry Sabo**, Senior Project Manager, Percept Research

**5:00 PM –
7:00 PM**

Welcome Reception

Location: Paul Peck Alumni Center
3142 Market St., Philadelphia, PA 19104

Reconnect with EMBAC colleagues, enjoy drinks and hors d'oeuvres, and build new connections while exploring “Extending Beyond: A Century of Drexel Legacies.” The exhibition highlights contributions of the Drexel family from the 1820s to the 1930s and is housed in the historic Paul Peck Alumni Center, designed by architect Frank Furness and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

DAY 2 – WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 2026

Location: Gerri C. LeBow Hall, 3220 Market St., Philadelphia, PA 19104
Room: DiPiero Grand Meeting Room (Room 220)

**8:30 AM –
9:00 AM**

Meeting Check-in & Networking Breakfast

**9:00 AM –
9:15 AM**

Welcome

Rajiv Nag, PhD, EMBA academic director and clinical professor of Management at Drexel University’s LeBow College of Business, welcomes meeting attendees and provides an overview of the meeting agenda.

**9:15 AM –
9:45 AM**

EMBAC’s Executive Director’s Address

Michael Desiderio, executive director of EMBAC, addresses the rapidly evolving executive education landscape and the vital role regional members play in advancing the profession, while encouraging members to leverage this network to navigate emerging challenges and shape the future of executive education together.

**9:45 AM –
10:30 AM**

Keynote Address: “Adaptive Business Leadership: Meeting the Challenges of a Rapidly Evolving Business Landscape”

Carlos Moreira, a partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers, examines the forces shaping local and global markets and demonstrate how real-world experiential learning is critical to developing adaptive leaders. He argues for actionable strategies for workforce transformation, responsible AI adoption and evidence-based decision-making to redesign business models and achieve sustained competitive advantage.

**10:30 AM –
10:45 AM**

Break

**10:45 AM –
11:15 AM**

**Executive Program Market Research:
Trends & Challenges**

Jerry Sabo of Percept Research presents data from the Northeast Regional EMBAC Membership Survey and prospective student research, highlighting regional and national trends to provide insights on meeting the needs of future students.

**11:15 AM –
11:45 AM**

**Table Discussions:
Planning for the Future of Executive Education**

Participants discuss findings and share insights with the full group.

**12:00 PM –
1:00 PM**

Lunch

**1:00 PM –
1:30 PM**

**Future-Ready Leadership Skills:
Why the Future of Exec Ed is a Practice, not a Program**

Anna Tavis, PhD, clinical professor and chair of Human Capital Management at NYU School of Professional Studies, explores the leadership capabilities required for the future of work and the necessity of integrating coaching, technology and human-centered leadership into executive education.

**1:30 PM –
2:15 PM**

Learning & Development Panel: Developing a Leadership Talent Pipeline

Representative leading companies share how they identify, develop and advance high-potential leaders in an interactive discussion.

Featured Panelists:

- **Moderator – Anna Tavis, PhD**, Clinical Professor and Chair, Human Capital Management, NYU School of Professional Studies
- **Dawn Graham, PhD**, Global Talent Management Director, Merck
- **Kate Raetsch, SPHR**, Assistant Vice President, Organizational Development, Inspira Health
- **Benjamin Ryan**, Vice President, Learning and Development, Comcast

**2:15 PM –
2:45 PM**

Table Discussions: Emerging Courses & Methodologies

A dynamic exchange on new courses and innovative teaching approaches aligning curricula with evolving business needs.

EXCURSION: Museum of the American Revolution

3:00 PM – 7:30 PM

101 S. 3rd St., Philadelphia, PA 19106

Celebrate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence with a visit to the Museum of the American Revolution. Opened in 2017 in the heart of historic Philadelphia, just steps from Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell, the museum tells the rich and complex story of the nation's founding.

You'll begin with an exploration of the museum's inspiring galleries and exhibits, including "The Declaration's Journey," a brand-new exhibition exploring the history and global impact of the Declaration of Independence and its 250-year history.

Afterward, connect with fellow conference attendees during an after-hours reception in Liberty Hall for a taste of Philadelphia with a menu of classic cheesesteaks, Italian roast pork, crab fries, soft pretzels, and more! You'll also be treated to a dramatic presentation revealing one of the most iconic surviving artifacts of the Revolution, General George Washington's Headquarters tent.



Itinerary

3:00 PM | Depart Drexel Campus

3:30–5:00 PM | Self-Guided Tour

5:00 PM | Private Screening of
"Washington's War Tent" Film

5:00–7:00 PM | Taste of Philly
Reception

7:15 PM | Depart Museum for Drexel
Campus

DAY 3 – THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2026

8:30 AM – 9:00 AM	Networking Breakfast
9:00 AM – 10:00 AM	Alumni Career Outcomes & Engagement Roundtable: Exploring the Path Forward Post-Executive Program Executive MBA alumni from across the region assemble for a candid discussion on career advancement, ROI, networks and long-term program impact. Featured Panelists: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moderator – <u>Will Ramey, DBA</u>, Owner, Shared Leadership Development (Drexel University)• <u>Claudia Busse, MD, FAAP</u>, Principal Scientist – CSRM, Merck (Drexel University)• <u>Brandon Jernigan</u>, Executive Vice President/Institutional Communications and Brand Lead, Meketa (Cornell University)• <u>Bo Zhao, PhD</u>, Founder and CEO, Baby Gear Group (The Wharton School)
10:00 AM – 10:30 AM	The Expanding Role of Global Immersion Courses Explore how international experiences enhance leadership development, strategic thinking and organizational ROI with presenters <u>Viktoria Kish</u> , founder and president of International Study Programs and The Global Exec, and <u>Rajiv Nag, PhD</u> , EMBA academic director and clinical professor of Management at Drexel University’s LeBow College of Business.
10:30 AM – 10:45 AM	Break
10:45 AM – 11:15 AM	From Lead Generation to Revenue Optimization: Rethinking the EMBA Recruitment Funnel <u>Anthony Campisi</u> , president of GPRS/ReadyRecruit.ai, shares a new perspective on increasing yield by viewing the enrollment funnel through a new lens.

**11:15 AM –
11:45 AM**

Closing Activity: From Insight to Action

Reinforce the critical insights you’ve gained from this year’s meeting and turn them into decisive action that keeps your EMBA portfolio current, competitive and future-ready during a closing activity led by Lara Etheredge, assistant director for EMBA at Drexel’s LeBow College of Business.

**11:45 AM –
12:00 PM**

Closing Remarks: Succeeding in a Competitive Environment

Janet Rizzuto, executive director of Corporate and Executive Education at Drexel’s LeBow College of Business, synthesizes key insights on staying competitive and fostering innovation.

**12:00 PM –
1:00 PM**

Lunch

1:00 PM

Meeting Concludes

MEETING PRESENTERS

(Listed alphabetically)



Claudia Busse, MD, FAAP

Principal Scientist – CSRM
Merck

Claudia Busse, MD, FAAP is a board-certified pediatric hospital medicine specialist, seasoned medical educator and healthcare leader with over 20 years of experience in clinical medicine. She earned her medical doctorate from Leipzig University, Germany. After residency training at Albany Medical College, she went on to build a distinguished career in pediatrics, medical education and clinical quality leadership.

As the Division Chief of Inpatient Pediatrics at a regional healthcare system in Eastern Pennsylvania, Dr. Busse led clinical operations and advanced patient care initiatives. After her recent career transition to the pharmaceutical industry, she now brings her deep clinical expertise to drive innovation in drug safety research.

Dr. Busse earned an Executive MBA from Drexel University’s LeBow College of Business and serves on Drexel LeBow’s Corporate and Executive Education Advisory Council, reflecting her ongoing commitment to leadership development and professional excellence.



Anthony Campisi

President, Graduate Program Recruitment Solutions
ReadyRecruit.ai

Anthony Campisi is President of Graduate Program Recruitment Solutions (GPRS) and ReadyRecruit, an AI-powered recruitment associate built specifically for graduate and executive programs.

For more than two decades, Campisi has worked alongside over 160 graduate business programs to improve marketing performance, strengthen recruitment funnels, and increase enrollment outcomes. Through his work with EMBA, MBA, specialized master’s and executive education programs nationwide, he has helped institutions rethink how they attract, engage, and convert today’s working professional students.

To address the growing challenge of limited staff capacity and inconsistent follow-up in admissions offices, Campisi and his team at GPRS launched ReadyRecruit.ai—an AI-powered recruitment associate that enables programs to

engage prospects instantly, maintain consistent multi-channel outreach and convert more inquiries into applications and enrolled students.



Michael Desiderio

Executive Director
Executive MBA Council (EMBAC)

Michael Desiderio was hired as the first full-time executive director of EMBAC in 2007. Since assuming that position, he has helped institute a focus on EMBA industry advocacy, thought leadership and a broader research agenda to help understand the educational needs of working professionals and the business community.

Desiderio holds an undergraduate degree in electrical engineering from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn and an Executive MBA from W. P. Carey School of Business at Arizona State University.



Mark Dierkes

Director of Recruitment for Executive Programs
LeBow College of Business, Drexel University

Mark Dierkes focuses on recruiting and retaining students for the Executive MBA and DBA programs at Drexel University's LeBow College of Business. With decades of experience in graduate recruitment and admissions, he is dedicated to helping working professionals achieve their personal and professional bests.

Dierkes holds a master's degree in educational administration from Cabrini University and a bachelor's degree in history/secondary education from La Salle University. He is the father of three daughters, lives in West Chester, Pa. and is a Swiftie.



Lara Etheredge

Assistant Director, EMBA
LeBow College of Business, Drexel University

Lara Etheredge is an assistant director of the Executive MBA program at Drexel University's LeBow College of Business, where she leads program operations, student engagement and curriculum coordination. With a background in education and business, she is passionate about creating meaningful, high-impact learning experiences that support professional growth and leadership development.

Etheredge holds an MBA from Drexel University and a bachelor's degree in English with a concentration in professional education from West Chester University of Pennsylvania.



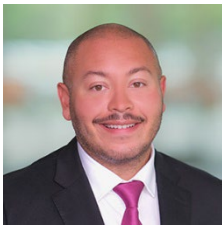
Dawn Graham, PhD

Global Talent Management Director
Merck

Dawn Graham, PhD is a corporate psychologist, TEDx speaker, LinkedIn Learning instructor and former host of “Dr. Dawn on Careers” on SiriusXM Radio. With more than 20 years of experience across end-to-end talent functions, she integrates corporate, clinical and coaching expertise to help individuals and organizations thrive amid uncertainty in the future of work. She currently serves in Global Talent Management at Merck & Co. in Rahway.

Previously, she was career director for the Executive MBA program at The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania and held talent leadership roles at Korn Ferry and KPMG. She is the author of “Switchers: How Smart Professionals Change Careers and Seize Success.”

Dr. Graham earned her PhD from the University of Denver and her MS from Johns Hopkins University, and she is licensed in New Jersey and Minnesota and through PSYPACT.



Brandon Jernigan

Executive Vice President/Institutional Communications
and Brand Lead
Meketa

Brandon Jernigan joined Meketa in 2018 and has worked in financial services since 2014. He leads the firm's communications and brand strategy, focusing on how clear messaging, narrative discipline and strategic alignment drive organizational success. Collaborating across investment, research, and leadership teams, Jernigan shapes how Meketa's expertise and values are communicated to clients and stakeholders. His combined interests in investments, brand, and strategy inform an approach that connects ideas to outcomes, reinforces trust, and strengthens the firm's long-term client partnerships.

Prior to Meketa, Jernigan was a senior relationship manager at MSCI and held roles in Vanguard's Retail Investment Group. He earned his MBA from Cornell University and his BBA from Western Michigan University. He is currently a Master of Science candidate in organizational dynamics at the University of Pennsylvania.



Viktoria Kish

Founder and CEO

International Study Programs and The Global Exec

Viktoria Kish is a leader in global experiential learning, known for shaping high-impact immersion programs that elevate leadership capability and develop global mindsets. As founder and CEO of International Study Programs (ISP) and The Global Exec, she has built two influential organizations that partner with universities, executive education providers and corporate clients to deliver world class, global learning experiences.

With deep expertise in international markets, cross-cultural intelligence and strategic global leadership, Kish brings a dynamic, future-focused perspective to how institutions and executives can leverage global immersion for meaningful development and organizational value. Her work connects learners with real-world international contexts and diverse cultural perspectives, helping educators and executives prepare for a rapidly evolving global environment. Kish is known for advancing immersive models that blend academic rigor, meaningful global exposure and reflective practice to support transformative learning and practical leadership growth.



Carlos F. Moreira

Partner

PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC)

Carlos F. Moreira is part of the Health Industries Advisory (HIA) group focusing on pharmaceuticals and life sciences (P&LS) at PwC. He provides strategy, operations, business analytics and technology consulting to help clients transform their commercial businesses. Specializing in both functional and technical capabilities, Moreira enables clients to leverage automation, cloud, data, technology platforms and analytics to boost revenue and margin performance.

With over 34 years of experience in the P&LS industry, Moreira has an extensive background in consulting and client services. Before joining PwC, he served as general manager for IMS's (IQVIA) North America Business Transformation Services, the data consulting division of IMS. Previously to IMS, he was a partner/owner at Envision Consulting, which IMS later acquired. Prior to that, he led the Pricing and Incentives Solution Practice at CSC and started his career in consulting up to becoming a manager at Andersen Consulting (Accenture).

Moreira has a BS in finance and management information systems from Drexel University's LeBow College of Business. He serves on Drexel University's President's Leadership Council and as vice chair of the LeBow College of

Business Dean's Advisory Board. He is an adjunct professor at Drexel LeBow and Villanova University's School of Business.



Rajiv Nag, PhD

EMBA Academic Director and Clinical Professor of Management
LeBow College of Business, Drexel University

Since joining Drexel University's LeBow College of Business in 2014, Rajiv Nag, PhD, clinical professor of Management, has focused his research on how organizations adapt, evolve and stay resilient in times of change. His work uses qualitative research to uncover insights that help leaders navigate complexity and drive transformation.

Dr. Nag also serves as the academic director for Drexel LeBow's Executive MBA program. He holds an MBA from the Management Development Institute in Gurgaon, India, and a PhD in management from Penn State University.



Will Ramey, DBA

Owner
Shared Leadership

Will Ramey, DBA, is the owner of Shared Leadership, LLC, a veteran-owned leadership and team development training provider. He honed his expertise leading teams in the U.S. Army and Fortune 500 companies, and possesses two decades of practical leadership and team development experience delivering highly engaging, educational and entertaining workshops.

Dr. Ramey earned his doctorate at Drexel University's LeBow College of Business with a focus on organizational behavior. He is a LEGO® Serious Play® workshop facilitator and Simon Sinek-certified WHY Discovery Coach.

When he is not spending time with his family, Dr. Ramey enjoys standup paddle boarding and golfing.



Kate Raetsch, SPHR

Assistant Vice President, Organizational Development
Inspira Health

Kate Raetsch leads Organizational Development at Inspira Health, where she shapes the talent development strategy for a system of 8,000 employees, driving leadership development, employee engagement, career pathways and organizational learning initiatives.

Raetsch has spent more than 25 years helping organizations achieve success by putting people at the center, building talent strategies, leadership cultures and learning ecosystems that make transformation stick. She has held senior leadership positions at Cencora (VP, Enterprise Learning), Radian Group (VP, Learning & Development), and TD Bank (VP, Learning and Talent Development). She continues to advise organizations on talent and organizational effectiveness through her consulting firm, Build Up Consulting, LLC.

An active community leader, Raetsch serves on the boards of the Philadelphia Society of People and Strategy (PSPS) and The Power of Professional Women (POWER).



Janet Rizzuto

Executive Director of Corporate and Executive Education
LeBow College of Business, Drexel University

Janet Rizzuto leads executive learning strategy at Drexel University’s LeBow College of Business with a clear focus on the needs of high-performing professionals. Her background spans senior leadership roles at Pfizer, directing executive education at Cornell University’s ILR School and shaping strategy for the Americas at Warner Music Group. She understands how leaders develop and organizations evolve, applying her business-tested insight to ensure our programs are rigorous and relevant to today’s business climate.



Benjamin P. Ryan

Vice President, Learning and Development
Comcast

Benjamin Ryan is a dynamic and forward-thinking HR executive with over 25 years of experience leading global groups in learning and development, talent management, talent acquisition and HR business partner functions across industries like finance, technology, and media.

Throughout his career, Ryan has helped shape the careers of thousands—designing programs that prepare teams for the future of work, accelerating executive readiness, improving hiring and employment practices—while focusing on practices that drive value for both customers and shareholders. Recently, he partnered with Drexel University to develop and launch an MBA in AI program and with Cornell University on an AI certificate program select Comcast leaders.

Currently, Ryan leads global learning initiatives for a multitude of businesses at Comcast, including all frontline customer focused roles, including Sales, Service

and technicians, Marketing, Product, Technology and Comcast Business. Prior to Comcast, he led human resources teams at several companies, including MBNA, Bank of America and AAA.

Ryan is a graduate of St. Joseph's University, and in his spare time, enjoys spending time with his family, cooking and caring for his 1820s historic home.



Jerry Sabo

Senior Project Manager
Percept Research

Jerry Sabo serves as a primary client lead for Percept Research's GME Lifecycle Survey Suite, partnering closely with clients to develop project timelines, provide fielding updates, support respondents and oversee quality assurance for data collection and final report deliverables.

With more than 25 years of experience managing projects and teams across multiple industries, Sabo is known for his commitment to precision, collaboration and on-time delivery. He fosters clear communication and builds cohesive, high-performing teams in dynamic work environments.

He earned his bachelor's degree in resource management and his master's degree in economics from West Virginia University, where he was a two-year varsity letterman in baseball and competed on the crew team.



Anna Tavis, PhD

Clinical Professor and Chair, Human Capital Management Department,
and Director, NYU Coaching Innovation Lab
School of Professional Studies, New York University

Anna Tavis, PhD, is a clinical professor and chair of the Human Capital Management Department at NYU's School of Professional Studies, where she also serves as director of the NYU Coaching Innovation Lab and host of the NYU Coaching & Tech Summit. A recognized thought leader, she has been named to the Thinkers50 Radar and among the Top 100 Global Influencers in People Analytics for three consecutive years.

Dr. Tavis is the co-author of "Humans at Work" and "The Digital Coaching Revolution." Her global career spans senior leadership roles at Motorola, Nokia, United Technologies Corporation and AIG Investments, as well as faculty appointments at Columbia University, Williams College and Fairfield University.



Bo Zhao, PhD

Founder and CEO

Baby Bear Group

Bo Zhao, PhD, is founder and CEO of Baby Gear Group, a fast-growing platform of baby gear rental libraries pioneering a circular economy model that strengthens reuse culture and domestic supply chain resilience. Her work is transforming how families access essential products, helping them save money while reducing emissions and keeping items out of landfills, with over 15 metric tons diverted to date.

Baby Gear Group was recognized as one of *TIME*'s Best Inventions of 2025 for building a new category of reuse infrastructure at the intersection of sustainability and consumer innovation. The company's original Philadelphia branch is now B Corp Certified.

Dr. Zhao's career spans materials research, oil and gas and e-commerce. She pursued a Wharton EMBA to advance in corporate leadership, but the experience ultimately laid the groundwork for her path to entrepreneurship.

Dr. Zhao champions mission-driven, human-centered entrepreneurship, offering a founder's perspective on adaptation, system redesign and value creation.