

DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY

COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY



School of Science
and Engineering

Saturday, May 9, 2026
UPMC Cooper Fieldhouse



Dear Graduate,

Today is a special day for you and for your families as you receive your hard-earned diploma from Duquesne University of the Holy Spirit. On behalf of our entire University community, I extend my heartfelt congratulations. You have worked with determination to reach this moment, and I am incredibly proud of all that you have accomplished. From this University – with its 148-year tradition of excellence – you are prepared to go anywhere and achieve the highest levels of success. I look forward to watching you embark on bold new paths and transform the world in the years ahead. And today, I am honored to welcome you into a new place within our University family, as you officially join the ranks of more than 100,000 Duquesne alumni around the globe.

This year's commencement holds special meaning for me personally, as I transition into my new role as Duquesne's Chancellor after ten years as President. As I look back on the past years I have shared with you – witnessing your growth, your resilience, and your many achievements – I do so with deep pride and gratitude. And as I begin the Chancellor position and work alongside President-elect David Dausey – who will do a fabulous job – I look forward to continuing to support you, champion you, and celebrate all that you will accomplish as Duquesne graduates.

Congratulations – the entire Duquesne University family salutes your success!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Gormley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Ken Gormley
President, Duquesne University

DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY

MAY
COMMENCEMENT
CEREMONY



Saturday, May 9, 2026

May 2026 Commencement

DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY

PRESIDING

Kenneth G. Gormley, J.D.
University President

PRELUDE

Fanfare to “La Péri”Paul Dukas
arr. Wayne Barrington

OPENING OF CEREMONY**David J. Dausey, Ph.D., Ed.D.**
Executive Vice President and Provost

PROCESSIONAL

Pomp and CircumstanceEdward Elgar
arr. Michael Green

THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER..... **John Stafford Smith**
arr. Garrett Hoffman
lyrics: Francis Scott Key

led by Zoey Wolfe

INVOCATION**Rev. Simon Adu-Gyamfi, C.S.Sp.**
Assistant Director, Spiritan Campus Ministry

WELCOME**Ellen Gawalt, Ph.D.**
Dean

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.....**Kenneth G. Gormley, J.D.**

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS.....**Samir Hifri**
B.S.'95, M.B.A.'98

PRESENTATION OF GRADUATES

Undergraduate Degree Candidates.....Pamela Marshall, Ph.D.
Chair of the Department of Forensic Science and Law

Graduate Degree Candidates.....Katherine Hornbostel, Ph.D.
Chair of the Department of Mechanical Engineering

CONFERRAL OF DEGREESKenneth G. Gormley, J.D.

CLOSING REMARKS.....Ellen Gawalt, Ph.D.

ALMA MATER.....Robert Traugh

Words and Music on Page 4

arr. Benjamin Cornelius-Bates

lyrics: Kenneth G. Gormley, J.D.

led by Zoey Wolfe

BENEDICTIONRev. Simon Adu-Gyamfi, C.S.Sp.

RECESSIONAL

Ode to Joy.....Ludwig van Beethoven

arr. David R. Thomas

(The audience is requested to remain at their seats during the recessional)

MARY PAPPERT SCHOOL OF MUSIC MUSICIANS

^Andrew David Taylor, trumpet

^Omar Martinez-Rosete, trumpet

Kaytoya Ichoku, horn

^Damon Webb, trombone

Kasey Higginbotham, tuba

Zoey Wolfe, soloist

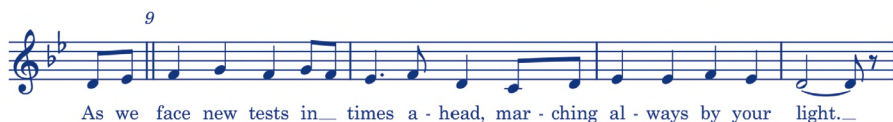
^Mary Pappert School of Music Graduate, May 2026

Duquesne University Alma Mater

Music by Robert Traugh | Words by Ken Gormley

Inspired by Rev. John F. Malloy, C.S.Sp.

Lively, with feeling ♩ = c. 88



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Commencement Speaker

Samir Hifri

B.S. '95, M.B.A. '98



As chairman and president of Covestro LLC, Samir Hifri serves as the senior leader of Covestro's U.S. organization.

Since Hifri joined Bayer (predecessor to Covestro) as a management trainee in Pittsburgh in 1998, his career has quite literally taken him around the world and back again. Over the last 25 years he has held various positions in North America, Europe and Asia, including director of North American product

management, global product manager in Germany, commercial head for Japan and Korea and head of the Asia Pacific coatings and specialties business located in Shanghai, China. Most recently, Hifri led the Covestro Hong Kong entity as managing director and head of APAC Supply Chain & Logistics.

Hifri holds a bachelor's degree in international finance from Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pa., and an executive degree from INSEAD in Fontainebleau, France. He is married with four children, and, in addition to his professional responsibilities, remains active in a number of community and academic functions.

SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

Ellen S. Gawalt, Ph.D., Dean

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE AND BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREE CANDIDATES GRADUATING WITH ACADEMIC HONOR

SUMMA CUM LAUDE

Alyssa Abrams	*Renee Marie Mercer
Michaela Rose Baer	Lexi Mikolosko
Miranda Marie Chitwood	*Rocco John Nardozzo
*Sarah E. Cole	*Trista Gabriella Ling Xu Newman
*Kieran Alexis DeLoatch	Kendall Christine Pask
Aidan John Feeley	Gabriel V. Pecar
*Joshua K. Graber	Kate Lauren Remaley
Tessa Anne Haffey	Billy D. Sanchez
*Victor Aidan Hermosillo	Kendall Olivia Sandrock
Maria Carolyn Hickman	Elizabeth Kate Stahovich
Darren Christopher Johnson	*Teresa M. Steffens
*Margaret Phyllis King	Jordan Elizabeth Stochla
*Megan Rae Kwiatkowski	*Bella Deborah Uwase
Emma Marie Landefeld	Anthony R. Valletta
*Mitchell David Livengood	Kayce S. Wills
Kendall Jane Mallarnee	Allison Patricia Zeiss

MAGNA CUM LAUDE

Gavin Reese Brazanskas	Olivia Kelly Kilbourne
Caylah Ann Crawford	Jasper Jean Kopfinger
*Sarah Lynne D'Angelo	Megan Danielle Lyons
Greta Rose DeRienzo	*Caitlin Elizabeth Mackey
Mia Rose Failla	Ashley Marie Mingrino
*Madison Rose Fitzgerald	*Corinne Bernadette Moscariello
*Miriam Paro Freer	Anitha Niyingenera
*Kaeden Emily Frino	Caitlyn C. Patton
Alayna Mackenzie Funke	Kayla Rose Pugliese
*Lucas Lorenzo Gallegos	*Elura Grace Rickard
*Jacob Andrew Hartman	Brooke Elizabeth Sanders
Joshua Patrick Hergan	Hailey Marie Slater
*Liam E. Hill	*Teagan Lee Starenchak
*Hailey Alizabeth Hofmann	William Fugerson Sutherland IV
Amina Ihabi	Sophia Marie Williams
*Alexis Rozalia Jantzi	*Benjamin Wu

CUM LAUDE

*Dominic Paul Belko
*Miles Kanaan Bertrand
*Evan Christopher Castlevetere
*Caitlyn Riley Chalovich
Holden R. Eagle
*Caroline Susan Ellis
*Kaitlyn Mae Fedorak
Madison L. Fellabaum
*Cole Joseph Garland
*Sydney Claire Garmus
Cassandra Renee Harding
Alexandra Rose Hess
Robert Thomas James III
Kyle Andrew Jerszyk
*Anika Olivia Katkich
Isabella Klenk
Madelyn Klosky
*Lydia Claire Kutzer
Chandler Last
Christopher Joseph Maguire

Paula Alderina Metro
*James A. Milbrand
Emily J. Mong
Neil Jayden Nayyar
Haleigh Elizabeth Newell
*Albert James Otto
Piper Ray Pardee
Leeann Carmela Parsi
Kaiya Emily Rang
Nathan Parker Rich
*McKenna Quinn Ritchey
Kiley May Roman
*Jacob Kristopher Shifler
Brienne Olivia Smith
*Casey Shea Merkel-Sullivan
*Sophia Grace Trevenen
Hannah Elizabeth von Geis
*Ezekiel James Warren
Fatima Zhintibiyeva
Elizabeth Michelle Zinzell

GRADUATES OF THE SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

CANDIDATES FOR THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE

Alyssa Abrams
 Lona Caline Adams
 Olaoluwarotimi Aaron Agbale
 Lynda Sthefania Angarita Delgado
 Michaela Rose Baer
 Chloe J. Bassil
 Melissa Beldjenna
 *Dominic Paul Belko
 *Miles Kanaan Bertrand
 Benjamin Michael Betz
 Matthew Ryan Bickerton
 Leah Ruth Blackford
 Jessica Sluganski
 Gavin Reese Brazanskas
 Leah Erin Burggraf
 Isabel Gray Cann
 Alexandra Carrillo
 *Evan Christopher Castlevetere
 *Caitlyn Riley Chalovich
 Miranda Marie Chitwood
 *Kelsey Faith Christianson
 *Sarah E. Cole
 Benjamin Michael Colli
 Caylah Ann Crawford
 *Sarah Lynne D'Angelo
 Finnegan J. Davis-Martin
 *Kieran Alexis DeLoatch
 Greta Rose DeRienzo
 Dominic Biagio Dezort
 Darnell D.F. Duncan
 Holden R. Eagle
 *Caroline Susan Ellis
 *Joshua Alan Evanish
 Mia Rose Failla
 *Kaitlyn Mae Fedorak
 Aidan John Feeley
 Madison L. Fellabaum
 Brooke Catherine Ferace
 *Madison Rose Fitzgerald
 Alina Marie Foor

*Miriam Paro Freer
 *Kaeden Emily Frino
 Alayna Mackenzie Funke
 Domenico David Fusca
 Michael David Gambardella
 *Cole Joseph Garland
 *Sydney Claire Garmus
 *Joshua K. Graber
 Tessa Anne Haffey
 Cassandra Renee Harding
 *Jacob Andrew Hartman
 Joshua Patrick Hergan
 *Victor Aidan Hermosillo
 Alexandra Rose Hess
 Maria Carolyn Hickman
 *Liam E. Hill
 *Hailey Alizabeth Hofmann
 Amina Ihabi
 Kwizera Janine
 *Alexis Rozalia Jantzi
 Kyle Andrew Jerszyk
 Miranda Rose Johns
 Alexis Diane Johnson
 Darren Christopher Johnson
 Kayley Elizabeth Jones
 *Anika Olivia Katkich
 Olivia Kelly Kilbourne
 *Margaret Phyllis King
 Robert Paul Kirkwood III
 Isabella Klenk
 Madelyn Klosky
 Seth Edward Kobal
 Lukas M. Koket
 Jasper Jean Kopfinger
 Farangiz Kosimjonova
 Allyson Marie Kraus
 Jennifer Renee Krizner
 *Lydia Claire Kutzer
 *Megan Rae Kwiatkowski
 Georgiya Dayle Lampenfeld

Emma Marie Landefeld	Ethan R. Sadoski
Chandler Last	Ismail Safy
*Aiden Henry Lehner	Billy D. Sanchez
*Mitchell David Livengood	Brooke Elizabeth Sanders
Margaret Eleanor Lutz	Kendall Olivia Sandrock
Megan Danielle Lyons	Jacob C.T. Schaner
*Caitlin Elizabeth Mackey	Noel Marie Shaffer
Noah Mackiewicz	Hailey Marie Slater
Kendall Jane Mallarnee	Dasara Slova
Ryan Thomas Marin	Marcis Shavelle Smiley
Madison Rose McBreaity	Brianne Olivia Smith
*Lindsey N. McKenna	*Sabrina Alexandra Soltero
Emma Lynn Meixel	Lavina Vidya Sripathy
*Renee Marie Mercer	Elizabeth Kate Stahovich
Paula Alderina Metro	*Teagan Lee Starenchak
Lexi Mikolosko	*Teresa M. Steffens
*James A. Milbrand	Jordan Elizabeth Stochla
Ashley Marie Mingrino	*Casey Shea Merkel-Sullivan
Emily J. Mong	Ross Richard Sumner
*Corinne Bernadette Moscariello	William Fugerson Sutherland IV
Jacob Manning Murphy	*Samuel John Taborski
*Rocco John Nardozzo	Longyu Tang
Neil Jayden Nayyar	Dan Michael Tanner
Haleigh Elizabeth Newell	*Kyah Mikaylah Thompson
*Trista Gabriella Ling Xu Newman	*Madison Maureen Toline
Nia Catherine Nicholson	Ynhu Nguyen Tran
Anitha Niyingenera	*Sophia Grace Trevenen
Lauren Eileen Oliva	Jessica Lesley Turner
*Albert James Otto	*Bella Deborah Uwase
Piper Ray Pardee	Anthony R. Valletta
Leeann Carmela Parsi	Palou Vito
Kendall Christine Pask	Hannah Elizabeth von Geis
Caitlyn C. Patton	Jasmyn Kristina Wallace Milling
Gabriel V. Pecar	Cassandra H. Ward
Chase Matthew Pugh	*Ezekiel James Warren
Kayla Rose Pugliese	Sophia Marie Williams
*John S. Rafla	Kalin Colleen Wilson
Jadon Zimraan Rahman	Charles Nathaniel Wise
Joseph McKeon Reeder	Dominik J. Wrage
Kate Lauren Remaley	*Benjamin Wu
Yae J. Rhee	*Travisia Lachole Wyatt
*Elura Grace Rickard	Allison Patricia Zeiss
*McKenna Quinn Ritchey	Fatima Zhantibiyeva
Kiley May Roman	Amber Zimmerman
Evelyn R. Rudich	Elizabeth Michelle Zinzell

CANDIDATES FOR THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE THESIS PROGRAM

Michaela Rose Baer

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Using Changes in the Microbiome of a Fingerprint to Determine Time-Since-Deposition

Chloe Bassil

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Identifying Non-Polar Compounds in Spices and Essential Oils using Linear Ion Trap Quadrupole Mass Spectrometry (LTQ-MS) and Density Functional Theory (DFT)

Leah Blackford

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: DNA Recovery from Blood under Fingernails Submerged in Water for Varying Periods of Time

Leah Burggraf

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: An Investigation of DNA Profiling Outcomes from Plant Material in Experimental Burial Scenarios

Alexandra Carrillo

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: A Comparative Analysis of Killing Methods Between Male and Female Serial Killers

Miranda Chitwood

Major: Physics

Thesis: Wavefront Aberrations in Gravitational Wave Detectors

*Sarah E. Cole

Major: Biological Sciences

Honors Thesis: Molecular Mechanisms Underlying the Natural Emergence of the Super Mucoic Variants Within a Population of *Pseudomonas Fluorescens*

*Caroline Susan Ellis

Major: Biological Sciences

Thesis: Growth and Differentiation Factor 15 (GDF-15) Promotes Retinal Ganglion Cell Neurite Outgrowth by Activating the RET/AKT Signaling Pathway

Madison Fellabaum

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Probing the Structure of the Serotonin Transporter with Ibogaine, Crosslinking, and Mass Spectrometry

Madison Fitzgerald

Major: Civil and Environmental Engineering and Science

Thesis: Determination of Micro- and Nano-plastic Presence in Water with Fluorescence Spectrophotometry

Alina Foor

Major: Physics

Thesis: Mossbauer Spectroscopy and X-ray Powder Diffraction Study on the Milled Gallium Oxide-hematite Nanoparticles

Alayna Mackenzie Funke

Major: Chemistry

Honors Thesis: Leveraging π -allyl Palladium Intermediates for the Formation of Nheterocyclic Compounds and Accessing Group 13 and 14 Azadipyrromethene Chelates via Alkali Salt Precursors for Applications in Optical Contrast Material

*Cole Joseph Garland

Major: Biological Sciences

Honors Thesis: Targeted Gene Knockouts and RsmE Missense Mutations Reveal Extracellular Secretion Networks Governing Biofilm Spatial Structure Formation in *Pseudomonas Fluorescens*

Sydney Garmus

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Strengthening Forensic Facial Reconstruction: Current Practices, Limitations, and Paths Forward

Tessa Haffey

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: The Impact of Fire Exposure on the Stability and Detonation Risk of PETN Core Detonating (DET) Cord

Cassandra Harding

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: The Effect of Water-Based Fire Suppression on the Characteristics of Bloodstain Patterns and Blood Spatter Analysis

*Jacob Andrew Hartman

Major: Chemistry

Honors Thesis: Decarbonylation Versus Decarboxylation: An Exploration of the Structure and Reactivity of Product Ions Generated from Al(III)-Formate Precursor Ions

Alexandra Hess

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: An Examination of Human Perception of Time as it Relates to Eyewitness Statements

Maria Hickman

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Analysis of the Quantity and Quality of Human DNA Recovered from Synthetic Hair

Hailey Hofmann

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Examining the Recovery of Foreign DNA from Neck Samples

Amina Ihabi

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Collision-induced Dissociation of Protonated Phenethylamine:
A Model Study to Aid Peak Annotation in Tandem Mass
Spectrometry of Illicit Drugs

MJ Johns

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: The Effects of Medically Induced Testosterone Levels on
Forensic Serological Analysis

Alexis Johnson

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Chemical Identification of 9mm Bullets Based on Manufacturer

Olivia Kilbourne

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: The Effect of Heat and Fire on the Ability to Identify and
Characterize Puncture Wounds and Blunt Force Trauma

Margaret King

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: An Analysis of DNA Loss During the Wash Steps of the
Promega Differex Extraction Process

Jennifer Krizner

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Examining the Perceptions of Music Therapy to Address Work
Stress for Professionals

Georgia Lampenfeld

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Simulated Drug Smuggling Through Cardboard

Emma Landefeld

Major: Physics

Thesis: Diagnostic Development for the Facility for Laboratory
Reconnection Experiments

Nevaeh Lindemuth

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Forensic Science Competency in Legal Training: Addressing
Gaps Exposed by Wrongful Conviction Cases

Kendall Mallarnee

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Evaluating DNA Recovery from Compromised Bone Samples
Using the Applied Biosystems RapidHIT ID System and
RapidINTEL Plus Cartridges

Renee Mercer

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Application of the MiSeq FGx Next-Generation Sequencing
System for the Deconvolution of DNA Mixtures

Paula Metro

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Hemlock Intoxication: Using New Methodologies to Analyze an Ancient Form of Suicide

Emily Mong

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Detection and Retention of Ethyl Mercaptan in Crime Scenes: Forensic Implications in Propane Exposure Cases

*Trista Gabriella Ling Xu Newman

Major: Biochemistry

Honors Thesis: Identification and Optimization of an Azole-Containing Compound Scaffold with Antibacterial Potential

Nia Nicholson

Major: Physics

Thesis: Study of Proton-Kaon Dihadrons in the Deep-Inelastic Scattering Regime

Piper Ray Pardee

Major: Biological Sciences

Honors Thesis: Major Histocompatibility Complex II Expression and Isolectin B4 Phenotype Patterns in Female Sprague Dawley Rats Following Chronic Constriction Injury and Treatment with a Celecoxib-Loaded Nanoemulsion

Leeann Carmela Parsi

Major: Biochemistry

Honors Thesis: SOX2 MRNA 3' UTR G-Quadruplex Interactions with the Fragile X Messenger Ribonuclear Protein: Novel Therapeutic Targets in Cancer

Caitlyn Patton

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: The Detection of Ignitable Liquids Exposed to Various Durations of Fire

Kayla Rose Pugliese

Major: Chemistry

Honors Thesis: Towards the Synthesis of Benzofuran Aza-DIPY Ligands for Biomedical Imaging

Kiley Roman

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Assessing Sharpie Markers as Vectors for Human DNA Contamination in Forensic Casework

Evelyn Rudich

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Optimizing Extraction and Detection of Designer Benzodiazepines for LC-MS/MS Analysis in Forensic Toxicology

Ethan Sadoski

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Degradation of Hydrogen Peroxide in Homemade Explosives

Brooke Sanders

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Comparative Wound Ballistics of 3D-Printed and Commercial Firearms: A Postmortem Analysis of Penetration Potential and Tissue Damage Using Pigs

Elizabeth Kate Stahovich

Major: Biochemistry

Honors Thesis: Mapping the Antidepressant Binding Site and Extracellular Loop Structures of the Serotonin Transporter with Crosslinking Mass Spectrometry

Casey Sullivan

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Assessing the Potential for CODIS-Eligible DNA Profiles from Smokeless Powder IED Fragments

Jessica Turner

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Detection of GHB and Rohypnol in Blowfly Larvae: Evaluating Forensic Toxicological Potential in Decomposition Contexts

Anthony R. Valletta

Major: Biological Sciences

Honors Thesis: Identification of Biofilm-associated Genes in *Pseudomonas Fluorescens* via Transposon Mutagenesis

Cassandra Ward

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Ancient DNA Analysis of Fossilized Remains from Latvia: Species Identification and the Role of Modern Genomic Techniques

*Ezekiel James Warren

Major: Biological Sciences

Honors Thesis: Nucleoid Compaction and Chromosome Segregation in a Filamentous Sporulating Soil Bacterium

Dominik Wrage

Major: Physics

Thesis: Meta-Analysis of Computational Methods for Predicting IR Spectra in Uranium Molecular Ions

Travisia Wyatt

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Deceptive Discourse: A Forensic Linguistic Analysis of Kenneth Bianchi's Post-Incarceration Communication

Allison Patricia Zeiss

Major: Chemistry

Honors Thesis: The Intrinsic Chemistry of Group 2 and Group 12 Binary Metal Hydrides: An Experimental and Computational Investigation

CANDIDATES FOR THE BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREE

Lucas Martin Connelly
Tristen Marie Gallagher
Matthew William Giannetta
Abigail Anne Harold
Samiya L. Henry
Saail Wajid Imam
Robert Thomas James III
Christopher Joseph Maguire

Jacob Aaron Orlofske
Kaiya Emily Rang
Nathan Parker Rich
Mary T. Russo
*Jacob Kristopher Shifler
Kayce S. Wills
Metju Zguro

CANDIDATES FOR THE MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE

Berk Luis Bahceci
Major: Environmental Science and Management

Josephine Laine Brent
Major: Environmental Science and Management

Peyton Reese Byers
Major: Forensic Science and Law
Thesis: Time Since Intercourse and Serological Testing in Sexual Assault
Homicides: A Case Report and Brief Review of the Literature

Janae Nadira Chase
Major: Forensic Science and Law
Thesis: The Effects of Synthetic Substrates on DNA Degradation and Inhibition
Using Blood Exposed to High Temperatures

Loreniz De Lourdes Colom
Major: Forensic Science and Law
Thesis: Survivability of Fingerprints on Metal Surfaces After Heat and
Flame Exposure

Carley Morgan Csikos
Major: Environmental Science and Management
Thesis: Simulation of Pulsed Flow for the Improvement of Pump-and-Treat
Remediation of Non-Aqueous Phase Liquids

Morgan Lane Czyzyk
Major: Forensic Science and Law
Thesis: Analyzing the Effects of Environmental Conditions on the Firing Pin
Toolmark Impressions on Cartridge Cases

Jessica Charlotte Dudich
Major: Forensic Science and Law
Thesis: Determination of Gunshot Residue to Mimic an Explosives Detection
Canine Aid Using GC-MS

Marie Elizabeth Ferrick

Major: Environmental Science and Management

Yamuna Garimella

Major: Computer Science

Roberto Gomez III

Major: Biology

Keara May Henry

Major: Biology

Vedika Anil Kale

Major: Biotechnology

Bhargav Kaparathi

Major: Computer Science

Matthew Laird

Major: Biomedical Engineering

Mohammad Zaid Sameer Sameer Maniyar

Major: Computer Science

Kendall Lauren Michaels

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Degradation and Stability of THC Standards in Oral Fluid Using LC-QQQ-MS

Julia Kristine Moorhead

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: CODIS, We Have a Problem: Addressing the Gap Between CODIS and Lawfully Owed DNA

Jhanvi Arvindkumar Patel Miss

Major: Computer Science

Jessica Pichat

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Compatibility of Latent Print Processing Methods with LC-QQQ-MS Detection of Trace Drug Residues

Michael Robert Rykaceski

Major: Environmental Science and Management

Thesis: Effectiveness of Home Water Filtration Systems for Removing Anions and Cations Found in Gas Brines

Hannah Delaney Schaeffer

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Enhancing Forensic Toxicology Through Post-Mortem Applications: Evaluating the Viability of Skin Swabbing as a Drug Testing Matrix

Katherine Rose Scheller

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Utilizing Forensic Pathology Slide Sorting to Support Cold Case Resolutions in Pennsylvania

Maksim Alexander Shcherbatyuk

Major: Biomedical Engineering

Thesis: Development and Characterization of Piezoelectric-Based Droplet-On-Demand 3D Bioprinter for Regenerative Medicine

Elisabeth Virginia Smith

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Determination of Assembly Time of 80% Firearms and Subsequent Operability

Maria Christine Sorce

Major: Environmental Science and Management

Thesis: Assessing the Impact of Fish Habitat Structures on the Fish Community in Patterson Creek

Dylan Brooks Stype

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Discerning Prompt-Based AI Generated Images from Real Photos

Marie Marcella Navarro Sullivan

Major: Environmental Science and Management

Melanie Virginia Tanis

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: A Comparison of the Resilience of Bulletproof Backpacks with Level IIIA Body Armor and Varying Contents Against 0.223 Rifle Rounds

Rosemary Cathleen van der Net

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: A Field-Ready Method for Wildlife Identification Using Noninvasive Genetic Sampling and Nanopore MinION Technology

Kara Jean Young

Major: Forensic Science and Law

Thesis: Developing a Cost-Effective CRISPR-Based Detection System for the Trout Gill Louse *Salmincola edwardsii*

CANDIDATES FOR THE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE

Dustin Charles Brown

Major: Chemistry

Dissertation: Impact of Macromolecular Crowding on Substrate Channeling of a Mitochondrial Metabolon and Substrate Inhibition Kinetics of Lactate Dehydrogenase

Chair: Mihaela Rita Mihailescu, Ph.D.

Anna Blaine Manges

Major: Biology

Dissertation: Engineering a Plasmid-Based Paratransgenesis System Suitable for Field Release

Chair: Jana Patton-Vogt, Ph.D.

School of Science and Engineering Honors and Awards

Sarah Cole	Excellence Award in Biological Sciences
Sarah D'Angelo.....	Mitchell E. Johnson Award
Madison Fitzgerald	Excellence Award in Civil and Environmental Engineering
Michael D. Gambardella	Certificate of Outstanding 4.0 GPA
Victor A. Hermosillo	Certificate of Outstanding 4.0 GPA
Megan Kwiatkowski.....	Excellence Award in Biomedical Engineering Excellence Award in Math and Computer Science Certificate of Outstanding 4.0 GPA
Emma Marie Landefeld	Excellence Award in Physics
Kendall Mallarnee.....	Excellence Award in Forensic Science and Law
Trista Newman	Excellence Award in Chemistry and Biochemistry
Teresa M. Steffens	Certificate of Outstanding 4.0 GPA

School of Science and Engineering Ambassadors

Leah Blackford
Madison Fellabaum
Miriam Freer
Alayna Funke
Jake Hartman
Maria Hickman
Jasper Kopfinger
Kendall Mallarnee
Corinne Moscariello
Rocco Nardozzo
Jacob Shifler
Elizabeth Stahovich
Kyah Thompson

STEM Scholars

Madison Fitzgerald
Victor Hermosillo
Amina Ihabi
Trista Newman
Kyah Thompson
Benjamin Wu
Travisia Wyatt

The Academic Procession

The Provost/Academic Vice President serves as the Commencement Marshal, holds the University mace and presides over the Academic Procession while standing directly in front of the platform. The raising of the mace signals that the Commencement ceremony is ready to begin. As the processional music begins, the procession of first the candidates for degrees, then the faculty and finally the platform party will file in. The audience should rise and remain standing until after the invocation.

Candidates for undergraduate degrees may be identified by the color of the tassel on the cap—which signifies the discipline. If they are receiving an advanced degree, the color on the neck band of the hood signifies the field of study.

Colors Distinctive of the Disciplines

White: Arts

Light Blue: Education

Yellow: Sciences

Apricot: Nursing

Drab: Business

Purple: Law

Sage: Pharmacy

Royal Blue: Philosophy

Pink: Music

Orange: Engineering

Academic Vestments

The gown, the cap, and the hood, representing the *major* components of the academic dress, are a ceremonial inheritance from the medieval universities of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, where clothing was an outward sign of social privilege and responsibility. Our usage of academic regalia derives from the early English universities. Academic clothing was first introduced at St. Peter's College, Cambridge University, in about 1284 A.D. Each school or college in Cambridge and in Oxford developed different methods to signal the various levels of degrees and the awarding institution. In America, in 1894 an Inter-Collegiate Commission met to adopt a uniform style for all degrees for all colleges and universities. The resulting code stated that every undergraduate robe would be the same style; likewise, every master's robe and every doctor's robe. Thus the academic dress worn by those participating in today's academic procession symbolizes both the level of their academic attainment and the institution they attended.

Gown

Although the gown is more frequently black, certain universities have authorized the use of colored gowns. The bachelor's and master's gowns were originally fashioned from black serge wool; today they are often of synthetic fabrics. The yoke of the bachelor's gown is designed to be worn closed and features long, flowing and pointed sleeves. The master's gown is designed to be worn open or closed. The sleeves are very long with squared ends, and the front part has an arc cut away. The wearer's arms protrude through slits at the elbows. The gown for the doctor's degree is made of wool, serge, or silk with an open front faced with wide velvet panels running from top to bottom. The sleeves are loose and bell-shaped with three encircling bars of velvet in black or in the color of the discipline in which the doctorate was obtained.

Hood

The most outstanding feature of the academic dress is the hood. It is usually worn only for the master's and doctor's degrees. The doctor's hood is longer than the master's hood (four feet vs. three and one half feet) and has distinguished panels inside. The college or university granting the degree is indicated by the color of the hood lining. Here, the panels are blue and red. The velvet trim on the hood indicates the field in which the degree was granted.

Cap

The standard cap is the mortarboard—or the Oxford-type cap—which appeared at Oxford after 1769 and replaced the round soft beret-like cap still worn at Cambridge. Its shape is variously explained as like the scholars and their books, or as derived from the Master Workman's actual mortarboard, or from the quadrangle shape of the campus. It is usually the color of the gown—black. The tassel is the color of the school for the undergraduate and worn on the right side of the cap until the moment the degree is conferred by the president. Then it is swung to the left side. The tassel for the master's degree is black and worn over the left front quarter of the cap. The tassel for the doctor's degree is also worn over the left front quarter of the cap and is of gold thread.

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Latin Honors (e.g., Cum Laude) listed in the program are based on cumulative grade point averages at the conclusion of the fall 2025 semester and are therefore tentative. Latin Honors are confirmed after the conclusion of the spring semester and will be reflected on final official transcripts and University diplomas.

**Honors College*