



M E R C E R U N I V E R S I T Y

Est. 1833

C O M M E N C E M E N T

2026

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Mercer Graduate:

Congratulations! Today, we celebrate you. You have reached one of the most significant milestones of your life. Commencement marks not only the completion of your degree, but the culmination of years of dedication, curiosity, resilience and growth. Along the way, you learned more about yourself, formed deep and lasting friendships and prepared to make a meaningful contribution to your community and the world. As you graduate, you leave with new confidence, hard-earned knowledge and accomplishments that deserve to be honored. Today is a celebration of those achievements, and it is also a celebration of your families, friends and supporters who stood beside you. They are incredibly proud of you, and so are we.

As your next chapter commences, know that you carry with you the full support of this University community. Whether this is your first, second or even third Mercer degree, Mercer University is part of the fabric of your life forever. You will always be part of the Mercer story, and more importantly, the Mercer family. Wherever your path leads, whether to a career, further studies, volunteerism and service, or other new adventures, may you take your next steps with courage, integrity, optimism and the unwavering Mercer spirit. The world needs your unique talents and contributions, now more than ever.

Again, on behalf of the entire Mercer community, I offer you my most heartfelt and joyful congratulations. We are celebrating with you and look forward with excitement to all that you will accomplish as you embrace the opportunities to make a positive impact on the world around you. We are honored that you chose Mercer and hope that you will stay in touch with the University in the years ahead.

As always, GO BEARS!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Penny L. Elkins". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Penny L. Elkins, Ph.D., CLAS '90, '92
President

MERCER UNIVERSITY COMMENCEMENTS

Approximately 2,275 students will participate in Mercer University's 2026 commencements. To make graduation a special day for these students and their families, Mercer University will conduct four ceremonies in May. Each ceremony will be unique and will reflect the schools and colleges represented.

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Friday, May 8, 2026 | 9 a.m.
Hawkins Arena, University Center, Macon Campus

SCHOOL OF LAW

Friday, May 8, 2026 | 3 p.m.
Hawkins Arena, University Center, Macon Campus

ATLANTA

Saturday, May 9, 2026 | 1 p.m.
Gas South Arena, Duluth

College of Pharmacy
School of Business
College of Education
School of Theology
College of Nursing
College of Professional Advancement
College of Health Professions

MACON

Monday, May 11, 2026 | 8 a.m.
Five Star Stadium, Macon Campus
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
School of Business
School of Engineering
College of Education
College of Professional Advancement
School of Music
College of Health Professions

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MERCER TRADITIONS

Mercer University is one of the oldest institutions of higher learning in the South and over 193 years has developed a number of cherished traditions.

SPIRES AND TOWERS

Each fall, part of new student orientation includes a trek up a combination of ladders, spiral staircases and wooden stairs in the Godsey Administration Building, the Macon campus's oldest structure, to reach the tower overlooking campus. Students write their names, graduating years and sometimes favorite messages anywhere from the first stairwell to the actual tower. In addition to the majestic spires adorning the Godsey Administration Building, the Macon campus skyline is also known for the spires of Willingham Hall and Newton Chapel.



PILGRIMAGE TO PENFIELD

Since the early 1900s, Mercer undergraduates have been making the trip from Macon to Penfield to celebrate the founding of Mercer University. The Pilgrimage to Penfield, as the tradition is now called, has evolved over the years from a celebration for graduating seniors to

an integral part of the Mercer first-year experience.

Penfield, which is located in rural Greene County, was the home of Mercer from 1833-1871. It was named after Josiah Penfield, a Savannah merchant, who challenged the Georgia Baptist Convention to match his \$2,500 contribution and support an educational institution. The Convention, fueled primarily from Jesse Mercer's financial contribution and leadership, met the challenge and opened Mercer Institute in 1833. It was renamed Mercer University in 1838.

Today, at Penfield, students participating in the Pilgrimage find the original

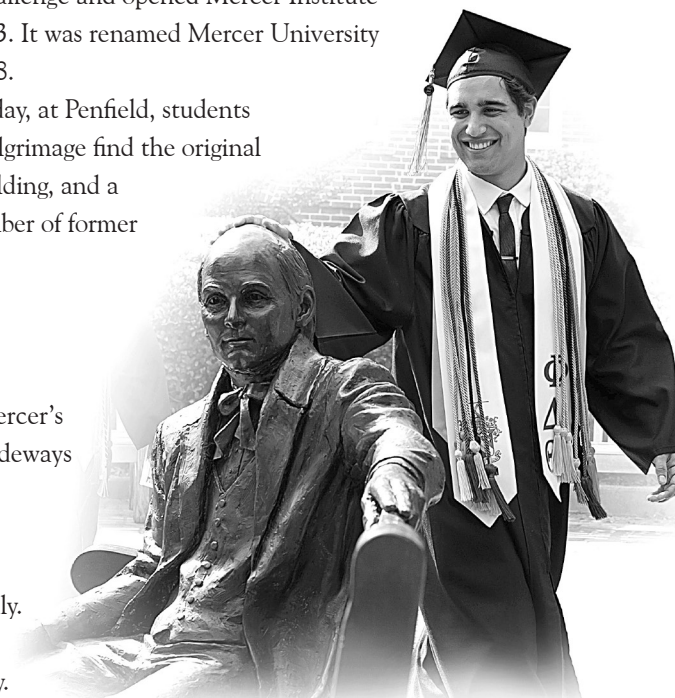
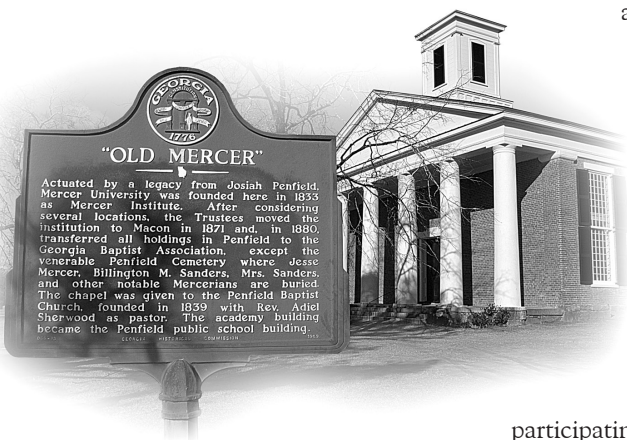
University chapel, the foundation of the first University academic building, and a cemetery that includes the gravesites of Jesse Mercer, as well as a number of former University presidents, trustees and leaders.

JESSE MERCER PLAZA

Statues of Jesse Mercer sit casually on benches in the middle of Mercer's Macon and Atlanta campuses. The founder of Mercer is staged at a sideways angle, looking ready for a conversation with a passing student.

Occasionally, the statue's head is rubbed by a frantic or uneasy student, hoping the tradition of good luck will work on an upcoming exam. During finals, traffic past Mercer's namesake increases drastically.

The statues in Macon and Atlanta are encircled by quotes from Jesse Mercer, selected by Mercer's 17th president, Dr. R. Kirby Godsey.



Since the statue was installed on the Macon campus in 1995, this area in the main Quadrangle has become one of the most visited sites on campus by students and alumni. The statue, sculpted by Don Haugen of Marietta, was duplicated on the Atlanta campus in 2005. Beginning in 2009, first-year students, as part of Fall Convocation, and graduating seniors, as part of Baccalaureate, began processing past the Jesse Mercer statue on the Macon campus, rubbing his head at the beginning of their academic careers and at the conclusion of their Mercer tenures.

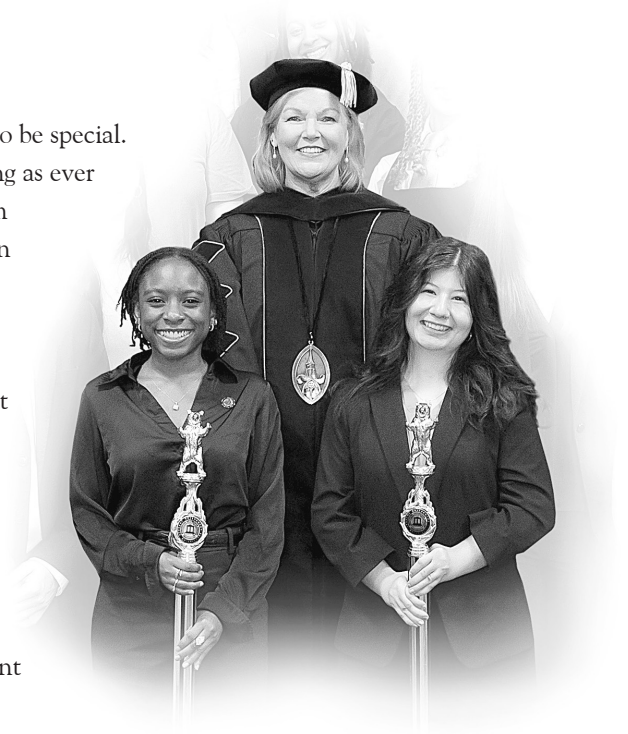
The statue was unveiled in conjunction with the reintroduction of the tradition of Founders' Day. The statue was paid for by a Student Government Association fund established specifically for constructing the Jesse Mercer statue.

FOUNDERS' DAY

For a university that is almost two centuries old, Founders' Day is bound to be special. While the annual celebration has a checkered history, the tradition is as strong as ever today. Founders' Day began in 1891, 20 years after the University moved from Penfield to Macon. At that time, Founders' Day was a celebration centered on Jesse Mercer's birthday. Mercer's two competing literary societies, Phi Delta and Ciceronian, each brought in a speaker to honor the heritage of Mercer and its founder.

Founders' Day remained a significant annual event for Mercer for the next 40 or 50 years, according to Dr. Doug Pearson, vice president and dean of students. The occasion had different formats during this period, ranging from political events attended by state governors to all-day historic celebrations.

While this tradition remained strong during the early- to mid-1900s, interest began to wane in the 1950s and 1960s. By the end of the 1960s, the tradition had been completely removed from the University calendar. The absence of Founders' Day lasted until the mid-1990s. At that time, the Student Government Association brought the event back to the Macon campus.



RINGING THE TIFT BELL

When Tift College merged with Mercer in 1986, the alumnae of the Forsyth women's school were apprehensive about Mercer's commitment to honor the Tift heritage. Mercer had joined with the Tift College Alumnae Association to create a plan to honor the historic institution, but when Mercer closed the campus in 1987, that concern was heightened by many members of past classes.

Then-President Dr. R. Kirby Godsey acknowledged the challenges of merging Tift into Mercer, especially following the closing of the school. During that period of the late 1980s, he continued to stress Mercer's commitment to honoring the legacy and heritage of Tift.

That persistence paid off for Mercer and Tift alumnae, primarily through the partnership of past alumnae and current Mercer women participating in the Tift College Scholars Program. This program provides scholarships, leadership development and, most importantly, mentoring from Tift alumnae to 125 women attending Mercer, which also named its College of Education for Tift in 2001.

The preservation of the Tift legacy is a combination of the heritage of Tift and the momentum of Mercer. Part of this history and tradition is the ringing of the Tift Bell, which was relocated to the Macon campus after the merger. Tift graduates began ringing the bell in 1959 as part of commencement festivities.



GRIFFIN B. BELL AWARD FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE



In March 1999, Judge Griffin B. Bell was awarded the Distinguished Service Award in Trusteeship by the Association of Governing Boards and Universities. The longtime Mercer Trustee was one of two national honorees selected from the 50,000 board members who volunteer their time to higher education. The University, in Judge Bell's honor, was presented a \$10,000 unrestricted cash award. At its April 2000 meeting, the Mercer Board of Trustees voted to use the award to establish the Griffin B. Bell Award for Community Service. This award is presented annually to a deserving graduating student from among Mercer's 12 schools and colleges.

THE HONORABLE GRIFFIN B. BELL



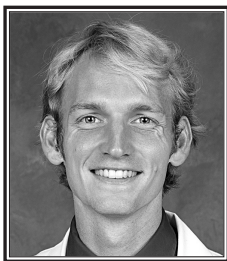
Originally from Americus, Griffin B. Bell graduated cum laude from Mercer University's School of Law with an LL.B. degree in 1948. He practiced law in Savannah and Rome before joining the law firm of King & Spalding in Atlanta as a partner in 1953.

In 1959, while a senior partner at King & Spalding, Judge Bell was appointed chief of staff by Georgia Gov. Ernest Vandiver. In 1961, President John F. Kennedy appointed him as a judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. After 15 years of service on the Court of Appeals, Judge Bell returned to King & Spalding. He resigned from the firm to become the 72nd Attorney General of the United States on Jan. 26, 1977, following his nomination by President Jimmy Carter.

He served as U.S. Attorney General until Aug. 16, 1979, when he returned to King & Spalding, serving as chair of its Policy Committee. An active counselor and advisor to leaders in Congress, the U.S. Attorney General's office and U.S. presidents, Judge Bell's influence was wide reaching. He is recognized as one of the country's great Americans. Judge Bell died Jan. 5, 2009, at the age of 90.

CHRISTIAN CASTEEL

School of Medicine



Serving and caring for others has been a constant throughout Christian Casteel's life, and he plans to carry that passion into his career as a pediatrician. A graduate of the School of Medicine's Class of 2026, he was a dedicated and enthusiastic servant-leader both on campus and in the community, with many of his roles aimed at uplifting youth.

As an undergraduate student double-majoring in biochemistry and Spanish at Berry College, Casteel was awarded the institution's Heisen Servant Leadership Award and DuBose Pre-Med Leadership Award. He served as a camp counselor, hospice volunteer and high school science tutor; did wildlife and ecosystem work as a volunteer for the Rome-Floyd E.C.O. Center; and contributed to a research project that provided a framework to reduce pollution levels in Rome.

Casteel built upon that momentum as a medical student on Mercer's Columbus campus, taking advantage of numerous leadership opportunities. He was selected as a Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Rural Pediatric Scholar, chosen for the School of Medicine's Summer Scholars program and participated in the 2025 Mercer On Mission program in Honduras, where his Spanish fluency was an asset as he worked with youth of all ages.

In addition, Casteel was the Columbus Student Director of the Young Physicians Initiative and the Columbus Class of 2026 Community Medicine Representative, and he held leadership positions in the School's Bear Buddy mentorship program, Christian Medical and Dental Association, and Military Medicine Interest Group. He also served as a School of Medicine Peer Tutor, church youth group leader and volunteer with International Friendship Ministries.

It is Casteel's goal to provide medical care to rural, underserved communities as a pediatrician. He wants to help eliminate health care barriers that uninsured and immigrant populations often face and serve his patients with empathy, compassion and loyalty.

To view past Griffin B. Bell Award for Community Service winners, visit studentaffairs.mercer.edu/awards/bell/.

ALGERNON SYDNEY SULLIVAN MEDAL

The Algernon Sydney Sullivan Medal is presented to the graduating students who best exemplify excellence in character, leadership, service to the community and commitment to spiritual values. This medal was established by The New York Southern Society in 1925, and at Mercer University in 1926, in memory of Mr. Sullivan, a great humanitarian and philanthropist.

MARCUS MUMBER

Undergraduate – College of Liberal Arts and Sciences



Through his leadership and vision, Marcus Mumber has inspired his peers as well as local children and laid the foundation for continued community impact. A biology graduate, he will continue his studies at Mercer School of Medicine this fall.

However, it was Mumber's interest in chess that allowed him to leave a lasting mark on the University and community as an undergraduate student. As vice president and then president of the Mercer Chess Club, he grew attendance and interest in the organization and established a successful outreach program at Roberts Academy at Mercer University, a transitional school in Macon for children with dyslexia. Learning chess was instrumental in Mumber's own dyslexia journey as a child, and he wanted to share his story and the game with area kids.

Since fall 2024, Chess Club members have visited Roberts Academy every Wednesday morning to teach interested students how to play the game, with Mumber planning engaging lessons and coordinating volunteers. Backed by his

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enthusiasm, kindness and genuine personality, he became a mentor and role model not only to the children but to his peers. The Roberts Academy program has since grown from 20 to 40 participants, and Mumber has set the framework for it to continue this fall as he begins his medical studies.

Mumber also volunteered with MerServe, nonprofit Chess and Community, Atrium Health Floyd and Harbin Clinic, KiKi's Camp for children with Type 1 diabetes, and Thumbs Up Mission, a nonprofit that supports families affected by cancer. In addition, he served as the scholastic chair for his fraternity, Lambda Chi Alpha, and as a biology teaching assistant, and he has been a certified basic life support/emergency medical technician provider since 2024.

With a talent for forging connections and a passion for helping others, Mumber is poised to continue making a difference in the world through any endeavor he sets his heart and mind on.

CAROLINE BANAHAN HAGER

Graduate – School of Law



As a Mercer School of Law student, Caroline Hager demonstrated an unwavering, authentic dedication to serving others. As she prepares to begin her legal work, it is clear that her career will be motivated by a strong sense of purpose and accompanied by a competent and compassionate approach.

Hager earned a Bachelor of Arts in international business and Spanish at Clemson University, where she was a member of the Division I rowing team. At Mercer Law, she set herself apart as an eager leader who always took time to connect with others and as someone with an ability to turn vision into action. As co-chair of the Student Bar Association's Community Outreach committee, she led students and faculty in service initiatives related to food insecurity, housing instability, child welfare and community well-being.

Under her leadership, Mercer Law secured three consecutive victories in the statewide Law School Legal Food Frenzy and raised thousands of dollars for the Middle Georgia Community Food Bank. She also organized the School's first Resource Fair during Wellness Week, which brought local service organizations to campus.

Mentorship is important to Hager, and she supported her fellow Bears by serving as a peer mentor and a criminal law group mentor. In addition, Hager was a student ambassador for Mercer Law's admissions office and a member of the Mock Trial Team, helping to bring home a national title. She also gained real-world legal experience as a research assistant to Professor Sarah Gerwig; a student in Professor Bonnie Carlson's Domestic Violence Clinic; and several law clerk, intern and assistant positions.

Hager plans to keep service at the heart of her career in legal civil defense litigation. She hopes to take on child welfare and human trafficking cases pro bono. As a long-term goal, she wants to become an adjunct professor so that she can guide and empower future generations.

To view past Algernon Sydney Sullivan Medal winners, visit studentaffairs.mercer.edu/awards/sullivan/.

JAMES T. MCAFEE, JR. ENDOWED VISION AND LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP

The James T. McAfee, Jr. Endowed Vision and Leadership Scholarship Fund recognizes outstanding leadership abilities of a junior, senior or graduate student in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, College of Pharmacy, School of Medicine, School of Business, School of Engineering, College of Education, School of Theology, College of Nursing, College of Professional Advancement, School of Music or College of Health Professions.

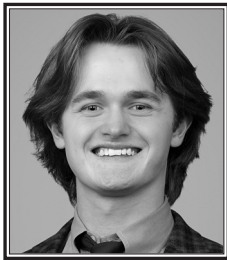
James T. McAfee, Jr. (1939-2004) provided strong leadership to Mercer University as chair and a member of the Board of Trustees. He was a generous benefactor of the University, and Mercer's School of Theology in Atlanta is named for him and his wife, Carolyn McAfee Bruner, a life member of the University's Board of Trustees. A nationally recognized leader in the health care industry, he served as chair of Hallmark Systems Inc., an Atlanta-based health care ownership and

management firm. He also was chair of the board of Baptists Today. He was a graduate of Union University in Jackson, Tennessee, and Georgia State University in Atlanta. He received honorary doctorates from Union University in 1990 and Mercer in 1999.

The James T. McAfee, Jr. Endowed Vision and Leadership Scholarship Fund was established in 2005 by his wife and son, J. Thomas McAfee III, a graduate of Mercer's School of Business and a member of the University's Board of Trustees.

ZACH CARMAN

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences



Zach Carman, from Marietta, is graduating with a Bachelor of Science in neuroscience, minors in biomedical physics, chemistry and Spanish and a perfect 4.0 GPA. He is a Presidential Scholar, member of the Honors Program and Phi Beta Kappa inductee. While he has excelled academically, these accolades only tell part of his story.

Since childhood, Carman has had an unquenching curiosity. He carried this curiosity into Mercer, where he explored his scientific interests while serving as a student research assistant in the fields of psychology, physics and biomedical sciences, assembling an impressive portfolio of presentations and co-authored publications. He also served as a teaching assistant and preceptor in various disciplines and garnered medical internships related to psychiatry and neurology.

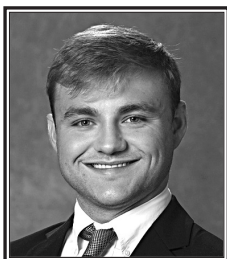
Carman explored the world around him through participation in two Mercer On Mission trips, Vietnam and Greece, the former of which he has been asked to return as a preceptor for this summer. Dr. Craig McMahan, University minister and dean of chapel, described Carman as a "tireless worker" who goes the extra mile "time and again to help another human being." In addition, Carman deepened his empathy through experiences as a hospice volunteer.

A leader on campus, Carman was active in MerServe, Mercer's student-led service organization, and served as president of the Mercer Prosthetics and Orthotics Club and Alpha Epsilon Delta Pre-Health Honor Society. His special interest in mental health led him to organize the Fall Wellness Fair, now an annual event, as a senator with Mercer's Student Government Association. In his limited free time, he loves music and plays bass in several Mercer jazz combos and the student-led funk band MothaFunka.

Carman's ultimate goal is to become a physician equipped with the scientific prowess and compassionate humility necessary to serve underserved communities. Currently a semifinalist for a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant award to Spain, he hopes to deepen his language skills and cultural fluency before medical school to better enable him to serve Hispanic populations in the future.

CARSWELL LEIS AND SANDRA SCOTT LEIS

School of Medicine



Carswell Leis, a graduating Doctor of Medicine student, is from Douglas. He earned a Bachelor of Science in biological sciences magna cum laude at the University of Georgia, where he was actively involved with Relay for Life and Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity. At the School of Medicine-Savannah, Leis served in leadership roles on Student Council and Honor Council and as a Medical Association of Georgia student delegate. He was involved in a quality improvement research project at Memorial Health University Medical Center focused on improving the care of the geriatric population.

From Midway, Sandra Scott Leis is a graduating Doctor of Medicine student. She was a competitive swimmer at the University of Georgia, where she earned a Bachelor of Science in education in exercise and sport science cum laude. At the School of Medicine-Savannah, Leis served as a peer tutor, chair of the ambassador program and member of the admissions committee. She was selected as a Landings Women's Golf Association Cancer Summer Research Scholar. She is a member of the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society and Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society and is the Honors Recipient for Outstanding Student in Internal Medicine and Outstanding Student in Population Health.

Carswell and Sandra Leis, who began as classmates and are now married, achieved the Distinction in Service to the Community recognition for the creation and implementation of Bear Down for Dinner, a volunteer opportunity in

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partnership with nonprofit organization Kids Café of America's Second Harvest of Coastal Georgia.

Both from rural Georgia, they were compelled to launch Bear Down for Dinner during their second year of medical school after personally witnessing friends and classmates who experienced food insecurity. Carswell and Sandra Leis established a working relationship with Kids Café, which packages and delivers nutritious dinners for school-aged children who are at risk for hunger, and recruited volunteers from Mercer University School of Medicine to work alongside them packaging take-home, hot meals for children in need. They also created nutritional pamphlets to include with each meal to increase awareness of healthy foods and habits for children and their parents. Thanks to the work of Carswell and Sandra Leis, thousands of meals were provided daily throughout the school year and summer to children from Chatham and nine surrounding counties who are eligible for free and reduced-price lunches.

After graduating, they will begin residencies in internal medicine at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston.

To view past James T. McAfee, Jr. Endowed Vision and Leadership Scholarship recipients, visit studentaffairs.mercer.edu/awards/mcafee/.

LOUIE D. NEWTON GENERAL EXCELLENCE MEDAL

The Louie D. Newton General Excellence Medal is presented to the graduating student who best exemplifies scholastic achievement, personal integrity and character, service to the campus community and a commitment to spiritual values. The award is named in honor of Newton, a Mercer alumnus, former Mercer professor, Christian journalist, distinguished pastor and renowned denominational leader.

ZACHARY BURKE

School of Business



Throughout his time at Mercer, Zachary Burke embodied academic excellence and strength of character in the classroom, on campus and in the community. With a desire to use his gifts and talents to serve others in meaningful ways, he took on a number of projects and roles with eagerness, discipline, care and responsibility.

Graduating with degrees in accounting and religion, he ranks at the top of his class with a 4.0 GPA. He displayed a genuine love of learning while mastering complex topics and going above and beyond the academic requirements of his academic programs.

As a participant in the 2024 Mercer On Mission program in Cape Town, South Africa, Burke's positive attitude, encouraging presence and work ethic were essential as the team collaborated with the Streetscapes organization on initiatives supporting the homeless population. Among his contributions, he communicated market research and financial data and identified and corrected sales invoice discrepancies.

He was a vital member of Mercer's Internal Revenue Service Volunteer Income Tax Assistance team, exuding the utmost professionalism and respect as he prepared tax returns for community members in need of assistance. He also served as a summer tax intern for Frazier & Deeter in Alpharetta.

In addition, Burke served as a peer advisor, president of the Catholic Campus Ministry, and vice president of religion honor society Theta Alpha Kappa. Outside of Mercer, he was a volunteer at Atrium Health Navicent Hospice Pine Pointe, a math and reading tutor at St. Peter Claver School and an involved member of his Catholic parish.

Burke's spiritual values stand front and center in his life. He seeks opportunities to serve the community and grow in his faith in everything he does. He hopes to become a Catholic priest and has been accepted into St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary.

To view past Louie D. Newton General Excellence Medal winners, visit studentaffairs.mercer.edu/awards/newton/.

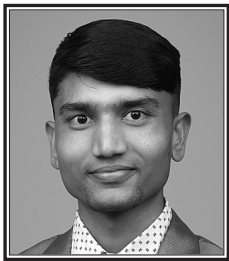
WALLACE DUVALL EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP AWARD

The Wallace DuVall Excellence in Leadership Award at Mercer University recognizes the outstanding leadership of a graduating senior from one of the University's undergraduate schools and colleges. For award consideration, students must be recommended by a faculty or staff member and nominated by their respective dean. Eligible candidates must demonstrate the abilities to motivate and inspire the confidence and trust of others, while possessing vision, intelligence, integrity and common sense, and having a good academic record. The selected recipient receives a financial award.

Wallace Odell DuVall (1901-1993) was an Atlanta attorney who spent most of his career in the banking industry. He served as secretary and attorney of the Atlanta Building and Loan Association, which later became Georgia Federal Savings and Loan Association, of which DuVall became chair of the Board of Directors and chair of the Executive Committee. A generous benefactor and longtime friend of Mercer University, he was a founding trustee of Atlanta Baptist College, which merged with Mercer in 1972 and became the University's Atlanta campus. He served three terms on Mercer's Board of Trustees, 1972-77, 1978-83 and 1985-90. The Dean's Suite at the Law School is named for him, as well as an academic building on the Atlanta Campus, where his portrait hangs.

RAJWOL CHAPAGAIN

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences



Rajwol Chapagain has distinguished himself as a compassionate, natural leader with vision and integrity. Graduating with degrees in computer science and communication studies, his 4.0 GPA and summa cum laude status are just the beginning of his impressive accomplishments.

Chapagain believes that “technological work is most impactful when it strengthens human connection and expands access to knowledge,” and the projects he has initiated have aligned with that inspiring mantra. His first major leadership venture came as a high schooler in Nepal, when he used his self-taught programming skills to co-found the Nepal Computer Science Alliance. Desiring to bridge digital literacy gaps between rural and urban Nepalese communities, the nonprofit hosted webinars and workshops that provided free computer science resources and

drew in 2,000 participants.

In 2022, Chapagain began classes at Mercer as the first international student to receive a Stamps Scholars Program full-ride scholarship. With a desire to build community, he founded the Mercer Game Development Club as a junior. The club now serves more than 100 budding video game developers and was recognized as the new student organization of the year by the Student Government Association in spring 2025.

In addition, Chapagain was a leader on the Binary Bears computer programming team, and he co-led a STEM outreach program in Nepal over spring break in 2025. He and Mercer students Prakriti Sapkota and Ria Tamrakar taught 600 students at three high schools how to use a low-cost, innovative microscope called Foldscope.

With a strong sense of purpose, Chapagain looks for ways to connect and empower others and turn opportunities into initiatives with meaningful impact. He has been a source of support and encouragement to other international students, helping them feel at home and navigate challenges. As he pursues a career in software engineering, he hopes to contribute to outreach efforts that take computer science beyond the classroom.

*To view past Wallace DuVall Excellence in Leadership award winners,
visit studentaffairs.mercer.edu/awards/duvall/.*

JOE AND JEAN HENDRICKS EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARD

The Joe and Jean Hendricks Excellence in Teaching Award is a University-wide award given at Commencement to an outstanding teacher at Mercer. Personal attention to students and a focus on superior teaching are distinguishing characteristics of a Mercer education, and this award elevates and honors these values. The award is named for two of Mercer's greatest teachers. Dr. Joseph "Joe" Hendricks and his older sister, Dr. Jean Hendricks, are both legendary at Mercer for their dedication to students and for their ability to engage students in transformative learning and discovery.

Dr. Jean Hendricks, a 1942 graduate of Tift College, earned her Ph.D. from Florida State University, served as chair of the Department of Psychology in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and was the beloved dean of the College of Arts and Sciences in Atlanta. Dr. Joseph Hendricks, a 1955 graduate of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, earned his Ph.D. from Emory University, taught in the First-Year Seminar program for 32 years (both siblings were instrumental in creating this long-running program), founded the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and taught for years in the Department of Christianity in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

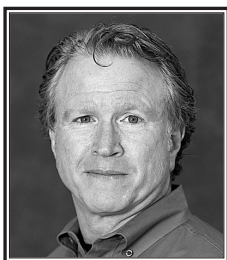
The Joe and Jean Hendricks Excellence in Teaching Award recognizes a full-time teacher in one of Mercer's 12 schools and colleges who best exemplifies the qualities that distinguished Joe and Jean Hendricks as teachers and mentors to generations of Mercer students:

- Challenging and inspiring teaching in and out of the classroom;
- Active engagement of students in the process of learning, discovery and leadership; and
- Caring mentoring to motivate students and junior faculty to achieve their highest aspirations.

The award carries with it a \$5,000 stipend.

PHILLIP T. MCCREANOR

School of Engineering



Dr. Phillip McCreanor is a master teacher whose remarkable career at Mercer University is a testament to his unwavering dedication to student engagement and mentorship. He joined the School of Engineering in 1999 and serves as director of the Engineering Honors Program. He holds a Ph.D. and M.S. in environmental engineering from the University of Central Florida and a BSE in mechanical engineering from the University of Miami. Dr. McCreanor's numerous accolades include the All-Southern Conference Faculty and Staff Team, Mercer University/Vulcan Materials Company Innovations in Teaching Award, the American Society for Engineering Education's Outstanding Mid-Career Teaching Award and the Georgia Governor's Teaching Fellow induction.

Dr. McCreanor's courses demand rigor while inspiring students to see engineering as a tool for meaningful change. His teaching philosophy, anchored in concepts, practice and reflection, is not aspirational rhetoric but lived practice. Students are challenged to move beyond procedural competence to deep conceptual understanding, ethical reasoning and professional judgment.

Perhaps the most visible expression of Dr. McCreanor's service-learning experiences is Mercer's nationally recognized Go Baby Go program. Under McCreanor's leadership, students have designed and modified 200 mobility vehicles for children with disabilities, including the first documented foot-operated power-and-steering vehicle.

Dr. McCreanor embodies the core values of the Hendricks Award, and through programs such as Go Baby Go and his community-engaged research partnerships, he helps tell Mercer's story in the most authentic way possible — through the tangible differences our students make in the lives of others.

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
COMMENCEMENT

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE COMMENCEMENT

Friday, May 8, 2026 | 9 a.m. | Hawkins Arena, University Center, Macon Campus

Presiding	Penny Loraine Elkins, PhD <i>The President of the University</i>
Call to Order	Eric Duhon <i>Trumpeter</i>
Academic Procession*	Mercer University Pipes and Drums
Invocation*	James Charles Elder, Jr., DMin <i>Pastor, First Baptist Church, Columbus</i> <i>Trustee, Mercer University</i>
Welcome	The President of the University
Greetings from the School	Jean Rawlings Sumner, MD, MACP <i>Dean, School of Medicine</i>
Greetings from the Board of Governors	Jennifer Tarbutton, MD, FAAP <i>Chair, School of Medicine Board of Governors</i> <i>Former Trustee, Mercer University</i>
Introduction of Speaker	Joyce Gulle, MD <i>School of Medicine, Class of 1986</i>
Commencement Address	J. Brent Box, MD, FACP, SFHM <i>School of Medicine, Class of 1986</i>
University Honors	The President of the University Lisa Murphey Lundquist, PharmD, FNAP <i>Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost</i>
Special Awards	Jean Rawlings Sumner, MD, MACP
Conferring of the Degrees	The President of the University <i>Master of Family Therapy Master of Science in Preclinical Sciences</i> <i>Doctor of Philosophy in Rural Health Sciences Doctor of Medicine</i>
Awarding of Diplomas	Jean Rawlings Sumner, MD, MACP
Hippocratic Oath	J. David Baxter, MD, FACP <i>Senior Associate Dean, Savannah</i>
Military and Special Programs Recognition	Andrew W. Torrance, MD <i>School of Medicine, Class of 1986</i>
Alumni Welcome	Sharon Moses, MD, FACOG <i>School of Medicine, Class of 1986</i>
Special Music, <i>Here I Am Lord</i>	J. David Baxter, MD, FACP <i>Composed by Dan Schutte</i>
Benediction*	James Charles Elder, Jr., DMin
Academic Recession**	Daniel McIntosh, MMus <i>Organist, Mulberry Street United Methodist Church, Macon</i> Eric Duhon

* The audience is requested to rise. ** The audience is requested to remain in place until the completion of the academic recession.
Military Promotion Ceremony will be held in Hawkins Arena immediately following – Invitation only.

J. BRENT BOX

Commencement Speaker



James Brent Box, MD, FACP, was among the inaugural class of physicians to graduate from the Mercer University School of Medicine in 1986. He retired from AdventHealth after most recently serving as the chief medical officer. In this role, he had oversight and responsibility for clinical quality and safety, hospital medicine, clinical analytics, provider data, clinical informatics, documentation integrity, and a broad range of initiatives dedicated to meeting the AdventHealth mission and goals of national top performance in clinical excellence, safety, reliability, value and patient experience.

Dr. Box previously served as senior medical director of hospital medicine for AdventHealth and as chief medical officer, chief hospitalist and medical director of clinics at AdventHealth Gordon from 2009 to 2016. He practiced internal medicine for 21 years in Calhoun, where he grew a large multispecialty clinic and started a hospital medicine program. He was also on the faculty in the Division of General Medicine at the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Medicine and served in the U.S. Navy as a naval flight surgeon.

Dr. Box earned a bachelor's degree in biochemistry from the University of Georgia. After receiving his medical degree from Mercer University School of Medicine, he completed his residency in internal medicine at the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Medicine. He is a fellow of the American College of Physicians and a senior fellow of hospital medicine of the Society of Hospital Medicine.

Dr. Box lives in Winter Garden, Florida, with his wife, Cheryl. They have four children, J.B., Mariel, Mary Beth and John David, and two grandchildren, Luke and McKay.

COMMENCEMENT PARTICIPANTS

FACULTY MARSHAL

Balint Kacsoh, MD, PhD

*Professor of Histology and Physiology, Department of Biomedical Sciences
Joe and Jean Hendricks Excellence in Teaching Award Recipient*

STUDENT MARSHAL

Alice House, MD, DABFM, FAAFP

*Senior Associate Dean, Admissions and Student Affairs
Professor, Department of Family Medicine*

READERS

Adam Albrite, PhD, LMFT

*Program Director, Master of Family Therapy Program
Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry
and Behavioral Sciences*

Manish Mishra, PhD

*Director, Master of Science in Preclinical Sciences Program
Associate Professor, Department of Biomedical Sciences*

Anne Montgomery, PhD

*Director, Doctor of Philosophy in Rural Health Sciences
Associate Professor, Department of Community Medicine*

Matthew Varn, MD

Faculty Representative, Valdosta Campus

Don K. Nakayama, MD, FACS

Senior Associate Dean, Columbus Campus

J. David Baxter, MD, FACP

Senior Associate Dean, Savannah Campus

Candi Nobles-James, MD, FACP

Senior Associate Dean, Macon Campus

ARNOLD P. GOLD FOUNDATION LEONARD TOW HUMANISM IN MEDICINE AWARDS

A key component of medical education is the compassionate and humanistic care of patients. In support of that premise, the Arnold P. Gold Foundation sponsors the Humanism in Medicine Awards to recognize and honor graduating students and faculty members who have demonstrated the highest standard of compassion and sensitivity in their interactions with patients. Mercer University School of Medicine graduating students and the faculty have, respectively, chosen a faculty member and a student who embody empathic, sensitive and respectful behavior in providing patient care.

2026 FACULTY HUMANISM IN MEDICINE AWARD

Charles Moore, MD

Associate Professor, Department of Pathology and Clinical Sciences Education

2026 STUDENT HUMANISM IN MEDICINE AWARD

Hannah Cabe

DR. ANNA N. WALKER AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

The Dr. Anna N. Walker Award for Teaching Excellence was developed in 2018 upon Dr. Walker's retirement and is deemed the highest award bestowed on a School of Medicine faculty member. The award acknowledges Dr. Walker's exceptional contributions to the School of Medicine and annually recognizes a faculty member who is an outstanding teacher and mentor dedicated to Mercer's mission.

2026 AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

Wei-Hsiung Yang

Professor, Department of Biomedical Sciences

CANDIDATES FOR DEGREES

◆ Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society | ♦ Gold Humanism Honor Society | † Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

MASTER OF FAMILY THERAPY

Christyana Lorelle Alston †
McDonough, Georgia

Elizabeth Ellen Bahar †
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Madison Nicole Benavidez †
Midland, Texas

De'Ja Vuchelle Bracy
Sugar Hill, Georgia

Ryasia Kehinde Brandy †
Snelville, Georgia

Julia Rose Conley †
Decatur, Georgia

Kounew Her De Leon
Lawrenceville, Georgia

Armyll Janee Dozier †
Atlanta, Georgia

Katie Elkins †
Atlanta, Georgia

Amber Nashay Enadeghe †
Atlanta, Georgia

Ry'n Osborne Foster †
Cumming, Georgia

Joslynn Jeannette Gates †
Atlanta, Georgia

Amanda Grant †
Atlanta, Georgia

Victoria Camille Johnson †
St. Louis, Missouri

Camia Kiera Elzie Jones †
Stone Mountain, Georgia

Heather Anne Lunsford
Culpeper, Virginia

Mona Sadat Mahdavi †
Johns Creek, Georgia

Allison Rickell Mainer
Statesboro, Georgia

Grace Lauren Mays †
Nashville, Tennessee

Zakiya Nilea' Muwwakkil
Akerele †
Jacksonville, Florida

Hanna Kang Oh †
Johns Creek, Georgia

Mansi Shaileshkumar Patel †
Warner Robins, Georgia

My Tuyet Phung †
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Bethany Faith Pruett
McDonough, Georgia

Zuzanna Malgorzata
Rabiniak †
Radom, Poland

Kearston Makayla Shannon †
Forsyth, Georgia

Cheryl Angela Smith
Senoia, Georgia

Emma Anne Steinhaus †
Macon, Georgia

Tavis Donta Tinsley †
Owensboro, Kentucky

Gianna Vitale †
Atlanta, Georgia

Lauryn Elise Waters †
Athens, Georgia

Alia Lashaè Wells †
New Orleans, Louisiana

Anna Michelle White †
Macon, Georgia

Arrie Williams †
Cochran, Georgia

Candis Wright-Graham
Pompano Beach, Florida

Citalli Zamarripa †
Gainesville, Georgia

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN PRECLINICAL SCIENCES

Markell Savant Adams
Morrow, Georgia

Sumer Bhurghi
Cumming, Georgia

CANDIDATES FOR DEGREES

◊ Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society | ♦ Gold Humanism Honor Society | † Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society

Aliqua K. Christensen
St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands

Devin Olivier duCille
Alpharetta, Georgia

Mikyraa T. Dukes
Carrollton, Georgia

Magdalene Francesca Ellis
Marietta, Georgia

Gage Allen Hart
Americus, Georgia

Harris Marc Helberg
Marietta, Georgia

Kevin S. Kim
Macon, Georgia

Kyra Meghan Kraus
Canton, Georgia

Earnest J. Lewis
Windsor, Ontario

Sabrina Monique Luckey
Brunswick, Georgia

Charles A. Melvin
Dudley, Georgia

Happy Rakeshkumar Patel
Adel, Georgia

Ashleigh Caroline Proctor
Martinez, Georgia

Varun Mani Senthil
Alpharetta, Georgia

Connor Joshua Slabiak
Cumming, Georgia

Jaylen Joshua Tindal
Fayetteville, Georgia

Abigail Elizabeth Vaughn
Rome, Georgia

Candice Marie Williams
Lawrenceville, Georgia

Olivia Mae Young
Social Circle, Georgia

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN RURAL HEALTH SCIENCES

Ashley Marie Harrington †
New Berlin, New York

LaVondra Twanett Scarver
Detroit, Michigan

DOCTOR OF MEDICINE

John David Adams
Crandall, Georgia

Saadia Akram
Waycross, Georgia

Ameena Ali
Columbus, Georgia

Neel Sachin Ambardekar
Alpharetta, Georgia

Travis Curtis Anderson ◊ †
Hazlehurst, Georgia

Jimmy Robert Asbell III
Macon, Georgia

John Austin Ashby
Decatur, Georgia

Juan Antonio Ayerdi ◊
Columbus, Georgia

Thomas Walter Bagwell
Cumming, Georgia

Alexandria Belle Bailey
Woodstock, Georgia

Savanna Katherine Banks
Richland, Georgia

Nicole Sade Bello
McDonough, Georgia

Mackenzie Lowman Best
Watkinsville, Georgia

Morgan Bailey Boyd
Eatonton, Georgia

Zachary John Briek
Johns Creek, Georgia

Victoria Christina Brown
Cumming, Georgia

Amanda Lora Brugh
Canton, Georgia

Evelyn Fagan Burley
Moultrie, Georgia

Melinda Claire Busman
Americus, Georgia

Sierra Mackenzie Byrd
Richmond Hill, Georgia

Hannah Elizabeth Cabe ♦
Harrison, Georgia

Christian Ray Casteel
Villa Rica, Georgia

Amber LaRue Castleberry
Barnesville, Georgia

Haley Channell ◊
Cumming, Georgia

Lauren Amberlie Chitwood ◊
Danielsville, Georgia

Daniella Alessandra
Chrabuszc ◊ †
Macon, Georgia

Lindsey Duke Clark
Bainbridge, Georgia

William Reid Clark
Canton, Georgia

Emily Victoria Clifton ◊ †
Metter, Georgia

William Roswell Clifton ◊ †
Valdosta, Georgia

Noah Arren Collins
Guyton, Georgia

Bree Annette Comer
Gray, Georgia

Matthew Ryan Corn
Grayson, Georgia

Olivia Anne Craig
Marietta, Georgia

Katherine Sara Cuadrado
Brookhaven, Georgia

Ashitha Dama ◊
Johns Creek, Georgia

Peyton Parker Dekle
Jesup, Georgia

Maria Betzabe Diaz
Dalton, Georgia

Rachel Anne Divack
Cumming, Georgia

Trey Austin Doss
Tifton, Georgia

Charles Chestnut Drew
Columbus, Georgia

MacLaren Anne Durkee
Macon, Georgia

Andrew Noah Ensley
Warner Robins, Georgia

Christiana Oluwatobi
Esowhode
Lawrenceville, Georgia

Amari Evans
Valdosta, Georgia

John Tyler Exum
Nashville, Georgia

Mauricio Jonas Farinacci
Richmond Hill, Georgia

Meagan Andreasen Farinacci
Warner Robins, Georgia

Elisa Rose Farrell ◊ †
Marietta, Georgia

Carlton Trent Faulk, Jr.
Talking Rock, Georgia

Lauren Barnes Fletcher ◊ †
Calhoun, Georgia

Dylan Cooper Fromm
Warner Robins, Georgia

Miller Gantt
Columbus/Hamilton, Georgia

Caroline Lee Gillanders ◊ †
Peachtree City, Georgia

William Claude Glawson IV ◊
Macon, Georgia

Joseph Richard Graham
Ringgold, Georgia

Jessica Melissa Greene
Gray, Georgia

LaBryson Armani Greene
Thomson, Georgia

Phoebe Grace Guidry
Perry, Georgia

Faith Christina Harris ◊
Guyton, Georgia

Abigail Elana Harrod
Americus, Georgia

Christopher Covington
Harvey ◊ †
Macon, Georgia

Franklin Harvey
Jeffersonville, Georgia

Sara Jane Hitt ◊
Waycross, Georgia

Mackenzie Copeland Hoover
Leesburg, Georgia

Harrison Blake Hughes ◊ †
Dalton, Georgia

Gia Annalise Jackson ◊ †
Macon, Georgia

Brandi Jarvis
Senoia, Georgia

Raymond O'Connor
Johnson, Jr.
St. Simons Island, Georgia

Alaina George Dawson Joiner
Sandersville, Georgia

Aneesa Ann Jones
Dahlonega, Georgia

Ana Marija Jukic
Savannah, Georgia

Daniel Kim
Columbus, Georgia

Wonjun Billy Kim
Alpharetta, Georgia

Nathaniel Augustine Kirchoff
Waycross, Georgia

Nicholas Aaron Kostromin
Martinez, Georgia

Megan LeeAnn Baker Kral
Hoschton, Georgia

Blake Austin Kunkler
Fitzgerald, Georgia

Jack Harris Lambert
Ty Ty, Georgia

Christopher M. Lane
Columbus, Georgia

Carswell Fredrick Leis
Douglas, Georgia

Sandra Scott Leis ◊ †
Midway, Georgia

Kathryn Odine Lockwood
Cleveland, Georgia

Sarika Mahajan
Alpharetta, Georgia

Brendan Michael Mahoney
Savannah, Georgia

Sasha Adaiiah Mainer
Metter, Georgia

William Harris Maloy
Newnan, Georgia

Hamit Martinez
CalumBUS, Georgia

Abigail Hightower Mastin
Macon, Georgia

Morgan Lindsay Mathis ◊
Macon, Georgia

Farran Smith McElligott
Gainesville, Georgia

Lilly Grace McIncrow
Savannah, Georgia

Baxter Lawson McWhorter
Rome, Georgia

Anita Mani Medepalli
Gainesville, Georgia

Tristan Luke Melton
Dawsonville, Georgia

Brandon Noel Merrill
Statesboro, Georgia

Raina A. Modi
LaGrange, Georgia

Jordan Riley Mount
Carrollton, Georgia

Bhuvaneshwari Muchandi
Suwanee, Georgia

Gautham Krishna Mudireddy
Blackshear, Georgia

Konner Smith Murray
Gray, Georgia

Cole Joseph Muzio ◊ †
Cumming, Georgia

Gabrielle Ann Newsome
Cedartown, Georgia

Trung Pierre Nguyen
Morrow, Georgia

Tahirah Aziza Nimi
Springfield, Georgia

Sara Elizabeth O'Neal
Thomasville, Georgia

Rhett Nathan Parr
Bishop, Georgia

Cameron Scott Paschal
Social Circle, Georgia

Casey Lee Passmore
Dawsonville, Georgia

Deep Pinakin Patel
Tifton, Georgia

Himani Patel ◊
Brunswick, Georgia

Karina Ashok Patel
SylvesteR, Georgia

Meha Nayan Patel
Gainesville, Georgia

Mitt Dinesh Patel
Camilla, Georgia

Payal Patel
Douglas, Georgia

Pratik Patel
Bainbridge, Georgia

Sonny Ramesh Patel
Moultrie, Georgia

Dat Daniel Minh Pham
Centerville, Georgia

Madeline Ngoc Pham
Hartwell/Athens, Georgia

Owen Charles Phelps
Albany, Georgia

Alyssa Brooke Phillips
Senoia, Georgia

Caroline Grace Poole
Fayetteville, Georgia

David Hernan Posas
Valdosta, Georgia

Sania Qazi
Duluth, Georgia

Sneha Rajeev
Midland, Georgia

Yenamala Ushasri Reddy
Baxley, Georgia

Andrew Garland Register
Donalsonville, Georgia

Alexander John Rehak
Columbus, Georgia

Briana Sykera LaMarya
Richardson
Albany, Georgia

Dominic Sean Robles
Statesboro, Georgia

Margarett Louise
Roddenbery ◊
Atlanta, Georgia

Toni Michelle Rogers
Watkinsville, Georgia

Michaela Routh ◊ †
Lawrenceville, Georgia

Corie James Salvi, Jr.
Statesboro, Georgia

John Marshall Scott ◊ †
Gainesville, Georgia

Haley Alston Sellars ◊
Ellaville, Georgia

Ian Alexander Sellars ◊ †
Cumming, Georgia

Lamonica Yvette Shinholster
Haddock, Georgia

Elizabeth Omolara Shoaga
Dallas, Georgia

Landon Charles Simmons
Cartersville, Georgia

Simran Kaur Singh
Bainbridge, Georgia

Madeline Grace Smith ◊
Rome, Georgia

Mary Catherine Stamey
Valdosta, Georgia

Haley Herold Stapleton
Savannah, Georgia

Nicole Elizabeth Steel
Alpharetta, Georgia

Persia Alexis Suárez
Cedartown, Georgia

Mohammed Hussain Syed
Atlanta, Georgia

Rebecca Ashton Taylor ◊ †
Waycross, Georgia

Anna Bryce Tucker
Gainesville, Georgia

Camden Davis Tucker
Tifton, Georgia

Kenley Rae Tyler
Barnesville, Georgia

Melanie Valencia
Flowery Branch, Georgia

Sahan Dhruv Vangala
Macon, Georgia

Austin Carter Waits
Jackson, Georgia

Isaiah Vontrez Nigel Ware
Columbus, Georgia

Katherine Elisa Waters
Brunswick, Georgia

Eva Franziska Weitkamp
Suwanee, Georgia

Rachel Evelyn Welch
Powder Springs, Georgia

Sara Kate Wiggins
Carrollton, Georgia

Reagan Bessinger Williams
Gainesville, Georgia

Abby Elizabeth Young ◊
Jackson, Georgia

Lynsey Elaine Young
Chatsworth, Georgia

HIPPOCRATIC OATH

(MERCER UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE VERSION)

I do solemnly swear and affirm in front of my faculty and colleagues as witnesses that throughout my life I will adhere, at all times, to the Mercer University School of Medicine Student Code of Honor and Professional Conduct and that I will keep that code and this oath:

I pledge to uphold and honor the principles of honesty, integrity and professionalism which are required for the practice of medicine and will accept my responsibility to keep these principles along with the consequences should I fail to do so.

I will hold those who taught me this art dear and will freely teach this art to those who wish to learn it. I will impart knowledge of the art to my own students.

I will use scientific foundations, which will benefit my patients according to my greatest ability and judgment, and I will knowingly do no harm or injustice to them. I will practice my profession with conscience and dignity. The health of my patient will be my first consideration. I will prevent disease whenever I can, for prevention is preferable to cure.

I will not give a lethal drug to anyone if I am asked, nor will I advise such a plan. I will not knowingly prescribe any drug that would do harm.

Into whatever homes or institutions I go, I will enter them for the benefit of the sick, avoiding any voluntary act of impropriety or corruption.

Whatever I see or hear in the lives of my patients, whether in connection with my professional practice or not, which ought not to be spoken of outside, I will keep in absolute confidence, as considering all such things to be private. I will respect the secrets, which are confided in me, even after the patient has died.

I will not permit considerations of religion, nationality, race, party politics or social standing to intervene between my duty and my patient.

So long as I maintain this Oath faithfully and without corruption, may it be granted to me to partake of life fully and the practice of my art, gaining the respect of all people for all time. However, should I transgress this Oath and violate it, may the opposite be my fate.

May I always act so as to preserve the finest traditions of my calling, and may I long experience the joy of healing those who seek my help.

SCHOOL OF LAW
COMMENCEMENT

SCHOOL OF LAW COMMENCEMENT

Friday, May 8, 2026 | 3 p.m. | Hawkins Arena, University Center, Macon Campus

Presiding	Penny Loraine Elkins <i>The President of the University</i>
Prelude	Daniel McIntosh <i>Organist, Mulberry Street United Methodist Church, Macon</i>
Academic Procession*	Mercer University Pipes and Drums
Invocation*	Sarah Gerwig <i>Professor of Law</i>
Welcome	The President of the University
Greetings from the Law School	Karen J. Sneddon <i>Dean and Professor of Law</i>
Introduction of Speaker	Karen J. Sneddon
Commencement Address	The Honorable Erica L. Woodford <i>Superior Court Clerk, Macon-Bibb County</i>
University Honors	The President of the University
Student Awards	Jeannie Zipperer <i>Assistant Dean for Student Affairs</i>
Special Recognitions	
Algernon Sydney Sullivan Medal	Lisa Murphey Lundquist <i>Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost</i>
George Waldo Woodruff Award of Excellence	Lisa Murphey Lundquist
Reynold J. Kosek, Jr. Excellence in Teaching Award	Seth Michael Lewis <i>Editor in Chief, Mercer Law Review</i>
Conferring of the Juris Doctor	The President of the University Karen J. Sneddon
Charge to Graduates	Karen J. Sneddon
Presentation of the Class of 2026	Alexis N. Merritt <i>President, Student Bar Association</i>
Hooding Ceremony	The President of the University Karen J. Sneddon
Benediction*	Sarah Gerwig
Academic Recession**	Daniel McIntosh

* The audience is requested to rise.

** The audience is requested to remain in place until the completion of the academic recession.

ERICA L. WOODFORD

Commencement Speaker



The Honorable Erica L. Woodford serves as the Clerk of Superior Court of Bibb County. A native of Macon, she earned her Bachelor of Arts in political science and African American studies from Mercer University and her Juris Doctor from Cumberland School of Law at Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama.

Woodford began her legal career in private practice, representing clients in juvenile, family and criminal matters for nearly a decade, before being appointed to serve as associate judge and magistrate in Bibb County Civil and Magistrate Courts. Prior to her election to public office, she taught as an adjunct professor at Fort Valley State University, Wesleyan College and Central Georgia Technical College.

Woodford was elected Superior Court clerk in 2012 and re-elected in 2016, 2020 and 2024. During her tenure, she has worked to modernize and broaden access to the office: implementing electronic filing ahead of the statutory mandate, hiring multilingual staff, digitizing all land records from 1823 to the present, and installing electronic filing kiosks in Macon-area public libraries.

Woodford led the Enslaved People Project, along with Dr. Chester Fontenot and attorney Stephanie Woods Miller, through which nearly 1,000 deed transactions documenting the sale of enslaved African Americans have been digitized and made available for public research. She considers this the most meaningful work of her career. The project was recognized with the 2023 Historic Preservation Award by the Historic Macon Foundation.

Woodford also serves as an adjunct professor at Mercer University Law School. She is a member of the State Bar of Georgia, the State Bar of Georgia Committee on Professionalism, the Constitutional Officers Association of Georgia, the National Association of Court Management (DEI Committee), the Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys, the Macon Bar Association, Downtown Rotary of Macon and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. She currently serves as president-elect of the Council of Superior Court Clerks of Georgia and will assume the presidency of that organization.

COMMENCEMENT PARTICIPANTS

MARSHALS

Bonnie Carlson
*Director of Experiential Education
and Associate Professor of Law*

Katie Powers
Assistant Dean of Advocacy

Scott Titshaw
*Associate Dean for Faculty Research
and Development and Professor of Law*

HOODERS

Kaleb Byars
Assistant Professor of Law

James P. Fleissner
Professor of Law

Patrick E. Longan
*William Augustus Bootle Chair in
Professionalism and Ethics and Professor of Law*

Gary J. Simson
*Macon Chair in Law and
Professor of Law*

USHERS

Mercer Law Students

GEORGE WALDO WOODRUFF AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

The George Waldo Woodruff Award of Excellence is Mercer Law School's most prestigious award. Given to the graduating student who has the highest GPA at the end of five semesters, the award honors George Waldo Woodruff, distinguished businessman, proponent of education and friend of Mercer University School of Law.

2026 AWARD RECIPIENT

Ashley Lane Hammond

CANDIDATES FOR DEGREES

* Cum Laude | ** Magna Cum Laude | *** Summa Cum Laude | ~ Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society | † Military

SCHOOL OF LAW

Reese Addison <i>Bonneau, South Carolina</i>	Andrew Alexander Cunningham <i>Griffin, Georgia</i>	Ashley Lane Hammond ***~ <i>Barnesville, Georgia</i>	Karolyn Grace Lucas <i>Maryville, Tennessee</i>	Nicolas Pegorer <i>Los Angeles, California</i>	Sheldon Clemon Suggs <i>Atlanta, Georgia</i>	Kelly Yoon <i>Cumming, Georgia</i>
William Anglin * <i>Sautee, Georgia</i>	Patrick Ryan Darnell <i>Newnan, Georgia</i>	Alexandria Elizabeth Hatten * <i>Barnesville, Georgia</i>	John P. Lynch * <i>Jacksonville, Florida</i>	Brittany Carter Phillips <i>Warm Springs, Georgia</i>	Lana Suleiman <i>Orange County, California</i>	Nicolette Zerillo <i>Cumming, Georgia</i>
Samantha Archer <i>Conyers, Georgia</i>	Isabelle Jones Darrah <i>Columbus, Georgia</i>	James C. Hawkins <i>Roswell, Georgia</i>	Ember L. Mayo <i>Summerville, Georgia</i>	Jackson Powell <i>Lawrenceville, Georgia</i>	Grant Swanson <i>Boca Raton, Florida</i>	SPECIAL HOODING
Paul W. Atwood <i>Winter Garden, Florida</i>	Kenadi Grace Davis <i>Hahira, Georgia</i>	Hilton Hebb ** <i>Jacksonville, Florida</i>	Elizabeth Lee McDaniel * <i>Monroe, Georgia</i>	Sebastian Rashley * <i>Cleveland, North Carolina</i>	Brantley Ben Swindell **~ <i>Claxton, Georgia</i>	Austin Bennett ** <i>Valdosta, Georgia</i>
Ynnel R. Banks <i>Decatur, Georgia</i>	Caleb Jackson Dills <i>Dalton, Georgia</i>	Conner Hill <i>Monroe, Georgia</i>	Dylan Todd McDowell <i>McDonough, Georgia</i>	Ricky Ray <i>Tifton, Georgia</i>	Elizabeth Darlene Tadlock <i>Birmingham, Alabama</i>	Mary Evelyn Brock <i>Gainesville, Georgia</i>
Ashton Cole Bearden *~ <i>Forsyth, Georgia</i>	Sarah Elizabeth Dinkins <i>Jacksonville, Florida</i>	Sara Hingson-Rodriguez ** <i>Jacksonville, Florida</i>	Graham Witherington McGinty * <i>Savannah, Georgia</i>	John T. Roberts ** <i>Watkinsville, Georgia</i>	Addison B. Taylor <i>Milledgeville, Georgia</i>	Stephens Olivia Preston Collins <i>Douglas, Georgia</i>
Jordan Boyer Bell ** <i>Atlanta, Georgia</i>	Cassandra Grace Doscher * <i>Valdosta, Georgia</i>	Charles Nathaniel Howard <i>Augusta, Georgia</i>	Elayna Malea McSwain <i>Gray, Georgia</i>	Jolie Anne Rowland * <i>Dublin, Georgia</i>	Ethan DeBruicker Terrell * <i>Sandy Springs, Georgia</i>	Charlie Johnson <i>Eastman, Georgia</i>
Elizabeth Porter Bolles * <i>Macon, Georgia</i>	Andrew Colby Eunice <i>Statham, Georgia</i>	Samantha Brooke Jackson <i>Dublin, Georgia</i>	Sonia Aurora Meletios <i>Alpharetta, Georgia</i>	Peter Garvey Rowsey <i>Roswell, Georgia</i>	Gunnar M. Tolson <i>Gainesville, Georgia</i>	William Patterson Kennedy <i>Macon, Georgia</i>
Emma Boyd <i>Woodstock, Georgia</i>	Melissa Flores ** <i>Lawrenceville, Georgia</i>	Kory Jarzyk ** <i>Loganville, Georgia</i>	Christopher Jared Mendelson <i>Cumming, Georgia</i>	Elizabeth Celia Sanchez <i>Flowery Branch, Georgia</i>	Lacey Elizabeth Toomey ** <i>Tyler, Texas</i>	Sarah Katherine Wall McDaniel <i>Hawkinsville, Georgia</i>
Gabriella Brown <i>Suwanee, Georgia</i>	Devin Russell Folser <i>McDonough, Georgia</i>	Briana Rose John <i>Sandy Springs, Georgia</i>	Alexis N. Merritt <i>West Green, Georgia</i>	Madison Victoria Schmitt <i>Cullman, Alabama</i>	Skylar E. Toto <i>Orlando, Florida</i>	Stephen Bradford Sikes ** <i>Columbus, Georgia</i>
Joe Preston Burch <i>Douglas, Georgia</i>	Vatia Marie Frazier <i>Columbus, Georgia</i>	Victoria A. Johnson <i>Lexington, Kentucky</i>	Sellers Culpepper Miller ** <i>Columbus, Georgia</i>	Jodie Lee Scott ** <i>Pelham, Georgia</i>	Tanner Townsend *~ <i>Woodstock, Georgia</i>	Kendall Naomi White <i>Acworth, Georgia</i>
Micah Stephen Burdette <i>Newnan, Georgia</i>	Kaitlynn Nicole Friscoe <i>Fort Myers, Florida</i>	Nicholas Steven Johnston <i>Miami, Florida</i>	Zachary Bryan Miller * <i>Leesburg, Georgia</i>	Kevin Christopher Scott, Jr. <i>Columbus, Georgia</i>	Karson Kenady Troth <i>Marshall, Missouri</i>	JURIS DOCTOR/ MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
Kaitlyn Marie Carannante <i>Buford, Georgia</i>	Hayden Garvin *~ <i>Vidalia, Georgia</i>	Devin B. Joiner ** <i>Chattanooga, Tennessee</i>	Jacob Elias Mitchell <i>Monticello, Georgia</i>	Courson L. Seymour <i>Thomaston, Georgia</i>	Austin Cherie Tucker <i>Cumming, Georgia</i>	Mackenzie Powell Crooms <i>Statesboro, Georgia</i>
Jayla Nyasia Monae Chambliss <i>Macon, Georgia</i>	Benson Thomas Gathany <i>Decatur, Georgia</i>	Lunden Keith <i>LaGrange, Georgia</i>	Raymond Howard Mobley III *† <i>Kathleen, Georgia</i>	Matthew Alexander Shatto *~ <i>Peachtree City, Georgia</i>	Curtis B. Walker, Jr. <i>Columbus, Georgia</i>	Bailey Dupré <i>Baton Rouge, Louisiana</i>
Jack Chenette <i>Fayetteville, Georgia</i>	Kayla Solange Goodridge <i>Covington, Georgia</i>	Nawar Khan <i>Duluth, Georgia</i>	Lucious M. Moore * <i>Fort Valley, Georgia</i>	Madison Shaw * <i>Kennesaw, Georgia</i>	Emily Kay Wallace <i>Locust Grove, Georgia</i>	Natalie Claire Frachiseur <i>Dahlonega, Georgia</i>
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Cayla Nicole Clark <i>Atlanta, Georgia</i>	Kendall Jan Greene <i>Atlanta, Georgia</i>	Thomas S. Kiser * <i>Ringgold, Georgia</i>	Toan M. Nguyen <i>Liburn, Georgia</i>	Morgan Elena Simmons <i>San Antonio, Texas</i>	Katie Ward <i>Newnan, Georgia</i>	Final grades for graduates are not due until June. Degrees and honors will not be determined or become final until all student GPAs are computed in June. The program reflects those graduating students who, based on grades earned in the first five semesters, are likely to receive honors when final grades are calculated.
Caroline Pannell Cole <i>Forsyth, Georgia</i>	Bryson Lucas Guillen <i>McDonough, Georgia</i>	Madison Knuth <i>Auburn, Alabama</i>	Isabel Nieves <i>Orlando, Florida</i>	Presley Ann Smith <i>Metter, Georgia</i>	Anna Gayle Wiggins ** <i>Bremen, Georgia</i>	
Jared Cox <i>Culloden, Georgia</i>	Jean Marc Guitton, Jr. <i>Augusta, Georgia</i>	Elena LaRoss <i>Powder Springs, Georgia</i>	Joi Nobles <i>Conyers, Georgia</i>	Margaret Stearman <i>Louisville, Kentucky</i>	Katherine Grace Wilder <i>Fort Valley, Georgia</i>	
LeeAnne Crespo <i>Valley Stream, New York</i>	Caroline Banahan Hager * <i>Lexington, Kentucky</i>	Talia Elizabeth Lane Levine ** <i>Windermere, Florida</i>	Grace Margaret Norton <i>Liburn, Georgia</i>	Sarah Scarborough Stilwell * <i>Macon, Georgia</i>	Mackenzie Caylin Wilder <i>Gainesville, Georgia</i>	
Marion Crossfield <i>Cumming, Georgia</i>	Rob Hamby <i>Demorest, Georgia</i>	Seth Michael Lewis ** <i>Decatur, Georgia</i>	Alexis Oliver <i>Darien, Georgia</i>	Patrick L. Stogner <i>Marietta, Georgia</i>	Jaidin Alyssa Winsor * <i>Thornton, Colorado</i>	
Joshua Justus Cummings <i>Athens, Georgia</i>	Jacob Ryan Hamm ** <i>Lakeland, Georgia</i>				Joshua R. Wright ** <i>Roswell, Georgia</i>	

CERTIFICATE IN ADVANCED LEGAL WRITING, RESEARCH AND DRAFTING

The Certificate in Advanced Legal Writing, Research and Drafting is awarded to students who have completed intensive advanced-level writing workshops spanning the final two semesters of law study, as well as advanced training in legal research and drafting.

Reese Addison	Stephens Olivia Preston Collins	Nawar Khan	Dylan Todd McDowell	Addison B. Taylor
Samantha Archer	Melissa Flores	Hannah Mackenzie King	Alexis N. Merritt	Tanner Townsend
Paul W. Atwood	Benson Thomas Gathany	Karolyn Grace Lucas	Brittany Carter Phillips	Kelly Yoon
Intisar Choudhury	Bryson Lucas Guillen	Elizabeth Lee McDaniel	Elizabeth Darlene Tadlock	

CERTIFICATE IN PUBLIC SERVICE

The Certificate in Public Service is awarded to students who have demonstrated a commitment to public service and have completed pro bono work as well as coursework focused on public service.

Reese Addison	Marion Crossfield	Vatia Marie Frazier	Elayna Malea McSwain	Elizabeth Darlene Tadlock
Jordan Boyer Bell	Caleb Jackson Dills	Nathan Lewis Gowen	Lucious M. Moore	Skylar E. Toto
Micah Stephen Burdette	Andrew Colby Eunice	Karolyn Grace Lucas	Matthew Alexander Shatto	Nicolette Zerillo
Jayla Nyasia Monae Chambliss	Devin Russell Folser	Dylan Todd McDowell	Morgan Elena Simmons	



ATLANTA COMMENCEMENT

COLLEGE OF PHARMACY

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

COLLEGE OF NURSING

COLLEGE OF PROFESSIONAL ADVANCEMENT

COLLEGE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS

ATLANTA COMMENCEMENT

Saturday, May 9, 2026 | 1 p.m. | Gas South Arena, Duluth

Presiding	Penny Loraine Elkins <i>The President of the University</i>
Academic Procession*	Alvin Roy Blount <i>Organist</i>
Invocation*	C. Gregory DeLoach <i>Dean, School of Theology</i>
Welcome	The President of the University
Introduction of Speaker	Lisa Murphey Lundquist <i>Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost</i>
Greetings and Words of Encouragement	Liza Guy Chapman <i>Mercer University Board of Trustees</i>
Special Music	Tanushka Sisodiya, CLAS '25
Message from the President	The President of the University
Conferring of the Degrees	
College of Pharmacy	Dean Michael Andrew Crouch <i>Bachelor of Science in Pharmaceutical Sciences Master of Science Doctor of Pharmacy Doctor of Philosophy</i>
School of Business	Dean Julie Ann Petherbridge <i>Bachelor of Business Administration Master of Accountancy Master of Business Administration Master of Science</i>
College of Education	Dean Thomas Raymond Koballa, Jr. <i>Bachelor of Science in Education Master of Arts in Teaching Master of Education Master of Science Specialist in Education Doctor of Philosophy</i>
School of Theology	Dean C. Gregory DeLoach <i>Master of Arts Master of Divinity Doctor of Ministry</i>
College of Nursing	Dean Tammy Diane Barbé <i>Bachelor of Science in Nursing Master of Science in Nursing Doctor of Nursing Practice Doctor of Philosophy</i>
College of Professional Advancement	Dean Priscilla Ruth Danheiser <i>Bachelor of Arts Bachelor of Science Master of Science Doctor of Philosophy</i>
College of Health Professions	Interim Dean Nannette Cole Turner <i>Master of Medical Science Master of Public Health Doctor of Public Health Doctor of Physical Therapy Doctor of Psychology</i>
University Marshal	Susan Whitley Miller <i>Professor of Pharmacy Practice, College of Pharmacy</i>
Presentation of Graduates	Sharon Lim Harle <i>Assistant Vice President, Office of Alumni Engagement and University Special Events; Reader</i>
Alumni Welcome	John Andrew Patterson <i>Senior Vice President for University Advancement</i>
Benediction*	Kellie Raiford Appel <i>Senior Vice President for Strategic Initiatives</i>
Academic Recession**	Alvin Roy Blount

* The audience is requested to rise. ** The audience is requested to remain in place until the completion of the academic recession.

LIZA GUY CHAPMAN

Greetings from the Mercer Board of Trustees



Dr. Liza Chapman graduated with her Doctor of Pharmacy degree from Mercer University College of Pharmacy in 2002. Her post-graduate experience includes a one-year community practice residency at Mercer University College of Pharmacy in conjunction with Kroger Pharmacy.

Dr. Chapman is currently serving as chief professional officer for the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB), where she is responsible for all external stakeholder relationships with national and state pharmacy professional associations, boards of pharmacy and educators and employers of pharmacy technicians. Prior to her time with PTCB, Dr. Chapman was the pharmacy clinical sales manager for the Kroger Co. Atlanta division, where she coordinated and managed all patient care services for over 180 pharmacies. Her practice focused on health coaching,

immunization delivery, medication therapy management and point-of-care health screenings.

Dr. Chapman has served in various leadership positions with the Gainesville-Hall County Junior League including president, is a past president of the Georgia Pharmacy Association (GPhA), and is a former chair of the Georgia Pharmacy Foundation. She currently serves as the chair of the Georgia Center for Civic Engagement Board of Directors.

Dr. Chapman has been recognized with the GPhA's Young Pharmacist of the Year, College of Pharmacy's Young Alumni of the Year, Meritorious Alumni, Carlton Henderson, and Distinguished Alumni awards, and is a fellow of the American Pharmacists Association. Her service to Mercer University includes as College of Pharmacy Alumni Board president, College of Pharmacy Board of Visitors member, National Alumni Board president and President Club chair. In addition, she is currently serving as a member of the Board of Trustees and the Mercer Athletic Foundation Board of Directors.

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Atlanta, Georgia

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Douglas, Georgia

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Ansley Sophia Brown
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Deondus D. Brown
Atlanta, Georgia

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Jonesboro, Georgia

Brandon T. Bush
Bainbridge, Georgia

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Herndon, Virginia

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Cleveland, Ohio

Iasmim Dias Combs ~
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Conyers, Georgia

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Harlem, New York

Jahvon Isaiah Cylin
Hampton, Georgia

Tatyana Elizabeth Davis
Miramar, Florida

Tristan Brian Davis
Macon, Georgia

Celia Diller ~
Rome, Georgia

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Onaedo Garrett
Grayson, Georgia

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Ronald Charles Hall King II
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Tamara L'Shea Howard
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Alamo, Georgia

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Akron, Ohio

Nicole E. Jett ~
Hoshton, Georgia

Kendra Renee Krebsbach ~
Oak Grove, Minnesota

Adelina Mercedes Lang ~
La Puente, California

Shermetria Danielle Massingale Poindexter ~
Tuskegee, Alabama

Edith Enyioma Mbaka
Richmond, Texas

Paul West Okojie
Lynchburg, Virginia

Asia Jermesia Paige ~
Hinesville, Georgia

Kruti Rashmikant Patel ~
Tampa, Florida

Rana Dallah Radwan
Dallas, Texas

Sonia Seridonio Ribeiro ~
Taunton, Massachusetts

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Aguada, Puerto Rico

Vianca F. Santos ~
Brooklyn, New York

Anusha B. Sheikh
Charleston, West Virginia

Velton W. Showell IV ~
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Joi Christina Franklin Stinson ~
Atlanta, Georgia

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Peachtree Corners, Georgia

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Sydney Ariel Siegel
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David Howard Stem
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Eddison Tre'Von Verrett
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Erika Riley Young
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Participation in the graduation ceremony does not necessarily represent conferral of the degree. Degrees are awarded at the end of the term in which all requirements are met. Honors printed in the program and announced at the commencement ceremony are based on grades earned at the time of program publication and may not reflect final honors.



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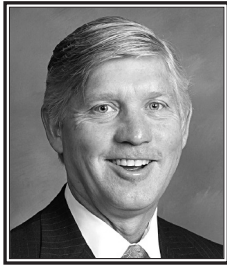
Monday, May 11, 2026 | 8 a.m. | Five Star Stadium, Macon Campus

Presiding	Penny Loraine Elkins <i>The President of the University</i>
Academic Procession*	Walton's <i>Crown Imperial</i>
Invocation*	Craig Thomas McMahan <i>Minister of the University and Dean of Chapel</i>
Welcome	The President of the University
Greetings and Words of Encouragement	Raymond McLeod (Thad) Warren III <i>Mercer University Board of Trustees</i>
Special Music, <i>Duo in G Major for Violin and Viola, K. 423 – III. Rondeau (Allegro)</i>	Anna Stein, <i>viola</i> <i>Bachelor of Music, Class of 2026</i>
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	Brinson Moore, <i>violin</i> <i>Artist Diploma, Class of 2026</i>
Introduction of the Speaker	Lisa Murphey Lundquist <i>Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost</i>
Message to the Graduates	Alisha Aryana Mitchell <i>Bachelor of Arts, Majors in Political Science and Journalism; Class of 2026</i>
University Honors	The President of the University
Student Awards	Douglas R. Pearson <i>Vice President and Dean of Students</i>
Conferring of the Degrees	The President of the University
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	Dean John Thomas Scott <i>Bachelor of Arts Bachelor of Science Bachelor of Science in Health Science</i>
School of Business	Dean Julie Ann Petherbridge <i>Bachelor of Business Administration Master of Business Administration</i>
School of Engineering	Dean Laura W. Lackey <i>Bachelor of Science Bachelor of Science in Engineering Master of Science Master of Science in Engineering</i>
College of Education	Dean Thomas Raymond Koballa, Jr. <i>Bachelor of Science in Education Master of Arts in Teaching Master of Education</i>
College of Professional Advancement	Dean Priscilla Ruth Danheiser <i>Bachelor of Arts Bachelor of Science</i>
School of Music	Dean Gary G. Gerber <i>Bachelor of Arts Bachelor of Music Bachelor of Music Education Master of Music</i>
College of Health Professions	Interim Dean Nannette Cole Turner <i>Bachelor of Science Master of Athletic Training</i>
Presentation of Graduates	Sharon Lim Harle <i>Assistant Vice President, Office of Alumni Engagement and University Special Events; Reader</i>
Alumni Welcome	John Andrew Patterson <i>Senior Vice President for University Advancement</i>
Alma Mater*	Stanley L. Roberts <i>Arthur Lowndes Rich Professor of Choral Conducting and Associate Dean, School of Music</i>
Benediction*	Craig Thomas McMahan
Academic Recession*	Verdi's <i>Aida: Grand March</i>

* Please stand. The platform party, faculty and students will process and recess.

RAYMOND McLEOD (THAD) WARREN III

Greetings from the Mercer Board of Trustees



Thad Warren serves as chair of the Mercer University Board of Trustees Executive Committee and is a former chair of the Board. He is currently serving his fourth five-year term as a trustee. He is chair and CEO of Warren Environment Inc. in Atlanta, North America's largest supplier of industrial stack and duct systems.

In addition to membership in many social organizations, Warren serves on numerous boards and foundations, including the Atlanta Youth Project and the Lake Rabun Association. As a member of Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church in Atlanta, he has taught Sunday school, worked on many committees and chaired the Board of Deacons. A 1986 graduate of Mercer's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Warren met his wife, Darlene, B.S. '86, at Mercer, and they

were married by Monroe Swilley, for whom the Atlanta campus library is named. The Warrens have two adult children and four grandchildren.

ALISHA ARYANA MITCHELL

Student Commencement Speaker



Alisha Mitchell, this year's Macon commencement speaker, is a dynamic and accomplished leader graduating from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences with majors in political science and journalism and a minor in media studies. She is a Tift Scholar, Jesse Mercer Scholar and Mercer Honors student.

During her time at Mercer, Mitchell made a lasting impact across campus. As a writer for *The Mercer Cluster*, she shared timely stories connecting the University and the Macon community. She also contributed her creative talents as marketing director for Georgia Women of Achievement, developing digital campaigns and materials that elevate the organization's mission. Through her work with undergraduate admissions, she welcomed prospective students and

families, helping them discover all that Mercer has to offer.

A dedicated campus leader, Mitchell got involved in the Student Government Association in 2022 and served as class president each year before being elected SGA president for her final year at Mercer. In this role, she guided campus initiatives, collaborated with University leadership and helped shape the student experience. Mitchell led with passion, energy and positivity, striving to create a space for every student voice and inspire leadership in others.

Mitchell's co-curricular involvement extended to numerous organizations, including the Pre-Law Chapter of the Black Law Students Association, Mercer Ambassadors and the Organization of Black Students. She is also a Lettie Pate Whitehead Scholar, Mercer Opportunity Scholar and Mercer Minority Mentor Scholar.

Following graduation, Mitchell will continue her academic journey at the University of Georgia on a full scholarship, where she will pursue a master's degree in public policy with a focus on policy analysis, community development and media influence. She will continue to share her immense Bear pride with others throughout the state and beyond.

COMMENCEMENT PARTICIPANTS

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Professor
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

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Associate Dean and Professor
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Susan Morrissey
Associate Professor
College of Education

Marcus Reddick
Associate Professor
School of Music

Carol Sargent
Associate Professor
School of Business

Jason Holloway
*Executive Director of Advising Services
and Enrollment and Instructor*
College of Professional Advancement

Rachel Le
Assistant Professor
College of Health Professions

Natalia Cardelino
Associate Professor
School of Engineering

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College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Vicki Luther
Associate Professor
College of Education

Monty Cole
Professor
School of Music

Marko Horn
Associate Professor
School of Business

Patsy Butts
Clinical Assistant Professor
College of Nursing

Mary Mathis
Professor of Practice
College of Health Professions

Ramachandran
Radharamanan
Professor
School of Engineering

Fred Bongiovanni
Professor
College of Professional Advancement

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Austin Dixon
*Student Government Association
Senior Class President*
Class of 2026

Callie Lowery
*Student Government Association
Vice President*
Class of 2026

UNIVERSITY ORGANIST

Jack Mitchener
*Professor, Chair of Keyboard Studies and
Director Townsend-McAfee Institute of Sacred Music*

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Augusta, Georgia

Mariam Ba *
Warner Robins, Georgia

Emily Louise Bailey *
Macon, Georgia

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Marietta, Georgia

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Norma Jean Jones **
Centerville, Georgia

Willdaya Jeanae Jones **
Peachtree City, Georgia

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Weston Carl Jesionowski ***
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Americus, Georgia

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SCHOOL OF MUSIC

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Micaela Collins
Stockbridge, Georgia
Choice Justine McCarty
Roxbury, Massachusetts
Kiah Lawson Shealy
Greenville, Alabama
Seth Watson
Macon, Georgia

BACHELOR OF MUSIC

Alana Leigh Blankenship ***
Americus, Georgia
Lucas David Meinberg *
Suwanee, Georgia
Anna Stein ***
Alexandria, Virginia

Anna Elizabeth Varisco ***
Little Rock, Arkansas

BACHELOR OF MUSIC EDUCATION

Theodore Stake Babbitt ***
Collinsville, Connecticut

Michael J. Bloom
Warner Robins, Georgia

Harley Nykol Flynn
Warner Robins, Georgia

Savannah Elaine Rosalee Legg ***~
Richmond Hill, Georgia

Cailey Alexandra Martinez ***
Douglas, Georgia

MASTER OF MUSIC

Jonathan Hannah
Dublin, Georgia
Alia Lene' Jackson
Minneapolis, Minnesota
James Jackson
Macon, Georgia

COLLEGE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

Zoe Catherine Alper
Johns Creek, Georgia
Madison Gabrielle Andrews *
Acworth, Georgia
Keerthana Atchutuni ***
Suwanee, Georgia
Hailey Danielle Bayer ***
Dunwoody, Georgia
Ariana Sheree Bennett *
St. Louis, Missouri
Kwesi Berko
Gwinnett, Georgia
Gabriella Noel Biel
Fayetteville, Georgia
Ryan Jowers Binney
Duluth, Georgia

Kaja J. Brown **
Chapel Hill, North Carolina
Savannah Nicole Browning
Valdosta, Georgia
Carly Elizabeth Concevitch ***~
Alpharetta, Georgia
Kayla McKenzie Cotter *
Buford, Georgia
Mekenah Elizabeth Dill **
Waycross, Georgia
Jenna Michelle Dove
Peachtree City, Georgia
Rebecca Jean Edwards **
Loganville, Georgia
Rose Amanda Elder ***
Tucker, Georgia

Anne Hollis Engel *
Carrollton, Georgia
Macy Elizabeth Fennell *
Midway, Georgia
Virginia Anne Fox ***~
Dacula, Georgia
Beyoncé Faith Curlis Francis **
Wallhouse, Dominica
Abigail Madison Goodwin
Guyton, Georgia
Scarlett Elise Heald
Macon, Georgia
Marissa A. Hogan **
Canton, Georgia
Maryam Ibrahim ***
Lawrenceville, Georgia
Isha Firoz Jalia
Fayetteville, Georgia

Aden Randall Janik ***
Kathleen, Georgia
Renee Lynn Jansen van Vuuren
Alpharetta, Georgia
Aspen Brooke Johnson
Vidalia, Georgia
Jalen Deron Jordan ***
Warner Robins, Georgia
Anisa Khan *
Lawrenceville, Georgia
Josiah Jacques Lamothe ***
Lilburn, Georgia
Katherine Paige Lerro ***
Lawrenceville, Georgia
Kaylyn Vanessa Loolen *
Carrollton, Georgia
Alma Denisse Luna
Jonesboro, Georgia

Jordyn Ariana Malone *
Lilburn, Georgia
Jada Gabrielle Moorman
Cincinnati, Ohio
Destiny Aaliyah Neal
Macon, Georgia
Manashi Kiritkumar Patel
Locust Grove, Georgia
Chloe Raine Pendergrast **
Douglasville, Georgia
Bethel Petros
Lilburn, Georgia
Pria Alexis Pullin
Sharpsburg, Georgia
Fabricio Resendiz-Cisneros
Chamblee, Georgia
Taniya Rushing
Moultrie, Georgia

Sydney Janae Snipes **
Houston, Texas
Shelby Mackenzie Stevenson *
Mableton, Georgia
Abigail Quinn Surratt
Bainbridge, Georgia
Antonio Demone Taylor **
Bainbridge, Georgia
Hermela Bereket Tekie
Lilburn, Georgia
Kate Marie Vane ***
Johns Creek, Georgia
Parks Emanuel Walker ***
Bonaire, Georgia
Nathan Tyler Weldon *
Carrollton, Georgia
Lana Gabrielle Whitfield
Johns Creek, Georgia

MASTER OF ATHLETIC TRAINING

Tyra Lynn Allmon
Knoxville, Tennessee
Anaamika Krithi Balan
Augusta, Georgia
Dominique Ann Carlson
Spotswood, New Jersey
Caleb James Duggan
Adel, Georgia
Ryan Christopher Frischkom
Macon, Georgia

Participation in the graduation ceremony does not necessarily represent conferral of the degree. Degrees are awarded at the end of the term in which all requirements are met. Honors printed in the program and announced at the commencement ceremony are based on grades earned at the time of program publication and may not reflect final honors.

MESSAGE FROM THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

On behalf of the Alumni Association, I congratulate you on reaching this important milestone in your life! While you may leave today to embark on future careers, further studies and all the other journeys of a long, interesting life, Mercer will never leave you. You are — and always will be — a Bear. And as such, you have a place with the Mercer University Alumni Association.

It is my honor to welcome you to the Alumni Association, a network of more than 94,000 Mercerians. There is no need to join; you are already a member. The Alumni Association is for all Mercer alumni and provides opportunities for you to connect with your classmates and all who came before you — and those who will come after. We hope you will stay in touch by keeping your contact information current, participating in reunions and events and supporting the University with your time, talent and resources.

We look forward to celebrating the milestones of your life with you and to being a resource for your lifelong learning. Together we roar!

Go Bears!



B. Todd Smith, BUS '93, '97
Associate Vice President and Executive Director



MERCER UNIVERSITY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
1501 Mercer University Drive, Macon, Georgia 31207-1517
(478) 301-2715 | (800) 637-2378 | Alumni@Mercer.edu

EMBLEMS

THE MACE

The mace is carried by the Marshal as a symbol of the authority of the University to confer degrees. Originally a weapon of war, the mace came to be used as an emblem of military power and civil authority. Its use as a symbol of university authority dates from medieval times.

The Mercer mace was designed in 1960 by Marshall Daugherty, professor of art in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and was first used for the inauguration of President Rufus C. Harris. It depicts a cross atop a globe, symbolizing the spiritual commitment of the University as it seeks to understand the world. Circumscribing the globe are the words, "Mercer University, 1833," symbolizing the influence of Mercer throughout the world. Beneath the larger globe is a smaller one, which represents the microcosm of the University. This, in turn, rests atop a form suggestive of a spire. The mace is made of bronze.

THE PRESIDENTIAL SEAL

The seal is worn by the President as a sign of authority. The seal was designed by Professor Otis D. Knight and Professor Marshall Daugherty and was first used for the inauguration of President Rufus C. Harris in 1960.

The seal, which was carved directly in fine silver and bronze, is a mandola-shaped pendant that depicts the form of the Godsey Administration Building, a ribbon and a stylized stained-glass window of Willingham Hall. The background is in bronze, and the window is in blue and red cloisonné enamel. On the ribbon are the Latin words for science, law, religion and the arts. On the border are inscribed the name of the University in Latin and the date of its founding. The shape of the seal is traditional for early university seals.

ACADEMIC REGALIA

The practice of wearing academic attire extends back to medieval times and the Renaissance, when it was the custom for teachers and students in European universities to wear gowns, caps and hoods. Although the wearing of the garb is now limited to formal occasions, the garb itself may be called the uniform of the professional scholar and teacher. The style and color serve as symbols of collegiate attainment.

The long sleeves of the gowns and the deep hoods were, on occasion, used to carry books and refreshments. Each European university developed its own style of garb with strict rules for its design. In the United States, however, most American colleges have agreed on a uniform design and color code.

Holders of bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees wear black gowns; the pattern and trimming differ for each degree. Originally, the bachelor's gown was made of serge or worsted and the master's of serge, worsted or silk; but now synthetic fibers are also used. The bachelor's gown is distinguished by its long pointed sleeves. The master's gown has long sleeves with a slit for the arm at either the elbow or the wrist. Doctor's gowns are adorned with velvet panels and bars that may be black or of a color distinctive to the wearer's discipline.

Holders of all degrees wear caps, popularly known as mortarboards, to which a long tassel is fastened that hangs over the left side of the cap. Doctors may wear tassels of gold thread. Holders of bachelor's and master's degrees may wear colors indicating the faculty by which their degrees were granted.

The academic hood is an ornamental fold that goes around the neck and hangs down the back of the gown. The length and shape of the hood vary with the level of the degree. Hoods are generally lined with the colors of the university which granted the degree and trimmed with the color representing the faculty by which the degree is granted.

The following colors are associated with the various faculties:

Arts, Letters, Humanities	White
Athletic Training	Sage Green
Commerce, Accountancy, Business	Drab
Education	Light Blue
Engineering	Orange
Journalism	Crimson
Law	Purple
Library Science	Lemon
Medicine	Green
Music	Pink
Nursing	Apricot
Speech	Silver Gray
Pharmacy	Olive Green
Philosophy	Dark Blue
Physical Therapy	Teal
Physician Assistant	Kelly Green
Psychology	Gold
Public Health	Salmon Pink
Science	Golden Yellow
Theology	Scarlet

MEDALLION OF PHI KAPPA PHI

The medallion is worn by faculty, administrators and students who are members of the National Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, an organization that initiates members from all disciplines. The cloisonné enamel medallion is decorated with the badge of the Society and is suspended from a blue, grosgrain ribbon.

ALMA MATER

MACON CAMPUS

On the city's western border
Reared against the sky,
Proudly stands our Alma Mater,
As the years roll by.

Chorus

Forward ever be thy watchword,
Conquer and prevail.
Hail to thee, O Alma Mater!
Mercer, Hail all Hail!

Cherished by thy sons and daughters,
Mem'ries sweet shall throng
Round our hearts, O Alma Mater,
As we sing our song.

ATLANTA CAMPUS

On the city's eastern border
Reared against the sky,
Proudly stands our Alma Mater,
As the years roll by.

Chorus

Forward ever be thy watchword
Conquer and prevail.
Hail to thee, O Alma Mater!
Mercer, Hail all Hail!

Cherished by thy sons and daughters
Mem'ries sweet shall throng
Round our hearts, O Alma Mater,
As we sing our song.



PHI BETA KAPPA ZETA OF GEORGIA

THE PHI BETA KAPPA SOCIETY — THE NATION’S MOST PRESTIGIOUS ACADEMIC HONOR SOCIETY — CHARTERED MERCER UNIVERSITY TO SHELTER THE ZETA CHAPTER OF GEORGIA IN 2015. In recommending Mercer for membership, the Society’s Committee on Qualifications described Mercer as a “quintessentially Phi Beta Kappa institution” in its values and mission, in its curriculum and general education requirements, in the variety of opportunities it provides its students, in the quality of its best undergraduates, and in the dedicated engagement of the faculty in all aspects of undergraduate education.

Phi Beta Kappa was founded Dec. 5, 1776, at the College of William and Mary by five undergraduates who sought to create a student society that would be more serious-minded than others that had previously existed at the Williamsburg, Virginia, institution.

The first college society with a Greek-letter name, Phi Beta Kappa is derived from the initials for the society’s motto, “love of learning is the guide of life.” ΦΒΚ introduced the essential characteristics of the numerous Greek societies that would follow. These included a badge, mottoes in Greek and Latin, a code of laws, an elaborate form of initiation and a seal.

Phi Beta Kappa is not awarded simply on the basis of high GPA or class rank, but on a student’s breadth of knowledge and coursework, including foreign language, math and sciences, and humanities and fine arts. An inductee into Phi Beta Kappa has taken a wide range of courses beyond a major. In addition to seeking out a broad range of academic interests, the ideal Phi Beta Kappa member has demonstrated intellectual inquiry and integrity as well as tolerance for freedom of thought and varied points of view. These are the distinctive elements of Phi Beta Kappa that distinguish it from Latin honors such as summa cum laude or department honors in a discipline.

Only 10% of the nation’s institutions of higher education have been awarded chapters of Phi Beta Kappa, and only 10% of an institution’s seniors may be inducted, making Phi Beta Kappa one of the most competitive and distinguished honors a student may achieve. Since ΦΒΚ’s founding, 17 U.S. presidents, 42 U.S. Supreme Court justices and more than 150 Nobel laureates have been inducted as members, along with countless authors, diplomats, athletes, researchers, actors and business leaders.

2026 PHI BETA KAPPA INDUCTEES

Jacob Allinson Junior <i>Cumming, Georgia</i>	Sahithi Doddaka Senior <i>Alpharetta, Georgia</i>	Elise Jones Junior <i>Midland, Georgia</i>	Manas Paresch Patel Senior <i>Brunswick, Georgia</i>	Dominick Bryant Still Senior <i>Cumming, Georgia</i>
Autumn Renee Baggett Senior <i>Hahira, Georgia</i>	Greer Evelyn Gardner Senior <i>Lizella, Georgia</i>	Riley G. Kelly Senior <i>Grovetown, Georgia</i>	Aleem Patni Junior <i>Alpharetta, Georgia</i>	Anna Rose Strupp Senior <i>Marine on St. Croix, Minnesota</i>
Thomas Xavier Bartlett Senior <i>Marietta, Georgia</i>	Bethany Tenagne Gedle Senior <i>Marietta, Georgia</i>	Emily McCafferty Senior <i>Atlanta, Georgia</i>	Noah Porter Junior <i>East Dublin, Georgia</i>	Olivia Kate Van Meter Senior <i>Fayetteville, Georgia</i>
Latoya Addie Bartley Senior <i>Springfield, Georgia</i>	Jenna Lynn Goodson Senior <i>Statesboro, Georgia</i>	Andrew Nicolas McCommon Senior <i>Marietta, Georgia</i>	Braeden Walker Prince Senior <i>Grovetown, Georgia</i>	Aditya Deveri Vayalapalli Senior <i>Duluth, Georgia</i>
Samantha Kay Burrell Senior <i>Las Vegas, Nevada</i>	Samuel Eric Hackworth Senior <i>Las Vegas, Nevada</i>	Keana Elise McKee Senior <i>Roswell, Georgia</i>	Brooke Leigh Roden Senior <i>Guyton, Georgia</i>	Kathryn Paige Volz Senior <i>Canton, Georgia</i>
Rajwol Chapagain Senior <i>Kathmandu, Nepal</i>	Sophia Hall Senior <i>Spring Hill, Tennessee</i>	Margaret Grace McWhorter Senior <i>Alpharetta, Georgia</i>	Makayla M. Shaffer Senior <i>Acworth, Georgia</i>	Hannah Lea Walker Senior <i>Ocilla, Georgia</i>
Rachel M. Chen Senior <i>Suwanee, Georgia</i>	Ziyan Hirani Senior <i>Peachtree City, Georgia</i>	Sai Chaitanya Mediboyina Senior <i>Suwanee, Georgia</i>	Madeline Silinskie Senior <i>Kennesaw, Georgia</i>	Abigail Rayne Williamson Senior <i>Opelika, Alabama</i>
Graham Robert Childs-Goodwin Senior <i>Atlanta, Georgia</i>	Allie Grace Hodges Senior <i>Lizella, Georgia</i>	Peyton Alexander Millwood Senior <i>Augusta, Georgia</i>	Marti Kaile Sommers Senior <i>Molena, Georgia</i>	Emily Shaw Wolfe Senior <i>Clarksville, Georgia</i>
Autumn Caroline Claxton Senior <i>Dublin, Georgia</i>	Beth Nkechi Ijeoma Senior <i>Dallas, Georgia</i>	Madeleine Hope Pardue Senior <i>Palmetto, Georgia</i>	Anna Stein Senior <i>Alexandria, Virginia</i>	

MERCER UNIVERSITY PROFILE

Mercer University is one of America's oldest and most distinctive institutions of higher learning, offering rigorous programs that span the undergraduate liberal arts and sciences to doctoral-level degrees. Founded by early 19th century Baptists, Mercer — while no longer formally denominationally affiliated — remains committed to an educational environment that embraces the historic Baptist principles of intellectual and religious freedom.

With approximately 9,000 students enrolled in 12 schools and colleges, on major campuses in Macon and Atlanta; medical school campuses in Macon, Savannah, Columbus and Valdosta; and at regional academic centers in Henry and Douglas counties, Mercer is ranked among the top tier and best values of national research universities by *U.S. News & World Report*. More than 94,000 alumni are making important contributions to their professions and communities throughout Georgia, the Southeast and the world.

While offering a breadth of programs found at much larger universities, Mercer maintains an intimate, student-focused culture more characteristic of smaller liberal arts colleges. Mercer's uniqueness is found in the way the University integrates five defining components of its mission: Liberal Learning, Professional Knowledge, Discovery, Service to Humankind and Community.

ACADEMIC DIVISIONS

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Macon — The oldest and largest of the University's academic units, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is Mercer's academic cornerstone. The College offers baccalaureate programs in the humanities, fine arts, natural sciences, social sciences, mathematics and computer science, along with a variety of interdisciplinary options. Offering a multitude of pre-professional programs in health, law and theology, the College also provides students a strong liberal arts foundation. The core curriculum blends practical skills, such as critical thinking, clear writing and effective communication, with a deep engagement with the diversity and richness of the peoples, faiths, cultures and natural processes in the world. Mercer has been frequently recognized by *U.S. News & World Report* for "Best Undergraduate Teaching" and has been honored by the Council on Undergraduate Research for its robust research opportunities for undergraduates. In 2015, Mercer was awarded a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, the nation's most prestigious academic honor society.

School of Law

Macon — Founded in 1873, Mercer School of Law is one of the oldest law schools in the U.S. and the first in Georgia accredited by the American Bar Association. Mercer Law School is committed to preparing students for high-quality, general practice in a supportive and professional learning environment. In 2025, the annual Gavel Rankings rated Mercer Law School's trial advocacy program No. 4 in the nation. It is a two-time recipient of the prestigious ABA Gambrell Professionalism Award

for excellence and innovation in ethics and professionalism throughout the curriculum. With an enrollment of approximately 400 students, Mercer Law continues to be recognized for preparing students for practice through its award-winning programs in legal writing, advocacy, experiential education and emphasis on ethics and professionalism.

School of Business

Macon, Atlanta, Henry County and Online — Established in 1984, Mercer's Stetson-Hatcher School of Business is named for Eugene W. Stetson, a 1901 Mercer graduate and business pioneer who leveraged the first major buyout in corporate history, and his grandson Robert F. (Bob) Hatcher, a Macon businessman, longtime supporter, Life Trustee and former board chair for the University. Over the past 80 years, Mercer has granted more than 12,000 business degrees, and many of its graduates hold senior leadership positions in companies around the world and are successful entrepreneurs. Mercer's business school delivers career-focused business education in order to develop innovative leaders who are responsible global citizens.

As an accredited member of The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International, the School of Business is among the top 5% of business schools worldwide. It has been recognized as one of the "Best Business Schools" in the U.S. by both The Princeton Review and *U.S. News & World Report*. Mercer is listed as one of the "Best Undergraduate Business Programs" by *U.S. News & World Report*, and has been recognized among "MBA Programs Where Grads Make More Money Than They Owe."

School of Engineering

Macon and Online — Mercer's innovative and academically challenging engineering and engineering-related programs provide students with a comprehensive education, featuring a solid foundation in mathematics and sciences, a core engineering curriculum, a range of courses in engineering specialties and a strong emphasis on communication methodologies and technologies. The School of Engineering marked its 40th anniversary in 2025, and its undergraduate program is consistently ranked among the top programs in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report*. Known for its breadth of instruction in its undergraduate program and its 4+1 integrated bachelor's and master's degree program, Mercer combines technical education with hands-on laboratory experience, research and real-world problem-solving. The School is the nation's leading producer of engineering Goldwater Scholarships and has produced 15 Department of Defense SMART Scholars in the last nine years.

College of Education

Macon, Atlanta, Douglas County, Henry County and Online — Mercer's Tift College of Education prepares more professional educators than any other private institution in Georgia. It offers undergraduate and graduate programs in teacher education and educational leadership, including

initial teacher certification, advanced teacher education, P-12 educational leadership, independent school leadership and higher education leadership. The College's teacher certification programs are approved by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. In addition to full-time, daytime baccalaureate programs for residential undergraduate students, the College of Education offers programs with flexible delivery formats for working professionals, including baccalaureate and graduate-level programs with a combination of online and on-campus coursework and fully online graduate-level programs.

School of Theology

Atlanta and Online — Established in 1996, Mercer's James and Carolyn McAfee School of Theology brings Jesse Mercer's founding vision of providing students with a classical and theological education full circle as it prepares students for ministry in the church and beyond. The School of Theology forms ministers and cultivates leaders who thrive spiritually, professionally and academically in service with congregations, communities and classrooms. The School's vision is to inspire churches and communities to imagine, discover and create God's loving and just world. The School offers master's and doctoral degrees, and several ministry concentrations. The innovative, fully integrated curriculum is taught by nationally recognized scholars who are committed Christians. Along with a network of partner churches, the School of Theology is affiliated with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

College of Professional Advancement

Macon, Atlanta, Douglas County, Henry County and Online — Mercer's College of Professional Advancement offers undergraduate, graduate and certificate programs for adults seeking leadership roles in their community and beyond, professional transition and advancement and lives that have meaning and purpose. Programs support the needs of high-growth and high-demand employment sectors and provide students with a multidisciplinary curriculum that integrates theory and practice. Flexible program delivery formats include fully online programs and options for a blended combination of online and on-campus coursework. Areas of study include communication, counseling, health care leadership, human resources, humanities, organizational leadership, public safety, psychology, science, technology, informatics, data intelligence and machine learning, along with interdisciplinary and self-designed options.

School of Music

Macon — Mercer's Townsend School of Music is nationally recognized for its Emmy award-winning artist faculty, internationally acclaimed students, wide range of performance ensembles and beautiful facilities. The School of Music offers a thorough and rigorous curriculum, providing a conservatory-quality music education within a university environment. Students benefit from small class sizes and individual instruction from faculty who regularly perform on campus and at major national and international venues. Specialized music programs include the Robert McDuffie Center for Strings and the Townsend-McAfee Institute for Graduate Studies of Sacred Music.

MERCER HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

The Mercer Health Sciences Center, a multi-campus academic health center, encompasses the School of Medicine, College of Pharmacy, College of Nursing and College of Health Professions. The Health Sciences Center enrolls more than 2,000 students, employs 450 full-time faculty and staff, and annually graduates more than 750 physicians, nurses and nurse educators, as well as family nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, physician assistants, pharmacists, physical therapists, family therapists, athletic trainers, clinical psychologists, public health professionals and biomedical scientists.

School of Medicine

Macon, Savannah, Columbus and Valdosta — Mercer's School of Medicine was established in 1982 to educate physicians and health professionals to meet the primary care and health care needs of rural, medically underserved areas of Georgia through education, service, research and collaboration. Today, a majority of graduates practice in the state of Georgia, and Mercer is a leader in the nation for those who are practicing in rural or medically underserved areas. The School's educational environment was the nation's first to be founded on a patient-based learning philosophy that is case-driven and provides early patient care experiences. The School of Medicine's four locations offer a campus environment for every type of student. Macon is the School's administrative campus. The Savannah campus was established in 2008 and is located adjacent to Memorial Health University Medical Center. Columbus began as a clinical campus in 2012 and welcomed the first four-year M.D. class in the fall of 2021. In 2024, a third- and fourth-year clinical campus was added in Valdosta at SGMC Health. All four campuses are closely integrated and function as one unit.

College of Pharmacy

Atlanta — Founded in 1903, Mercer's College of Pharmacy has a long history of advancing health care through teaching, research, patient-centered care and service innovations. The College's motto, "A tradition of excellence, a legacy of caring," frames its philosophy of providing excellent academic programs in an environment where every student matters and every person counts. Students are encouraged to get involved in the College's many nationally recognized professional organizations. They also can take advantage of internships and other opportunities with Atlanta-based health care organizations and government agencies. Construction of the Moye Pharmacy and Health Sciences Center was completed in late 2023, and it opened to students in January 2024.

College of Nursing

Macon and Atlanta — Mercer's nationally recognized Georgia Baptist College of Nursing is the longest-established nursing program in Georgia. With a rich history dating back to 1902 and more than 9,000 alumni, the College is grounded in the heritage of excellence in nursing education. The College of Nursing advances the nursing workforce through multiple degree options, and faculty are dedicated to the development of professional nurses committed to scholarship, leadership,

practice, research and service within a culture of academic excellence. In 2025, the College added a full, four-year B.S.N. program on the Macon campus.

College of Health Professions

Macon and Atlanta — The College of Health Professions is composed of six disciplines: physical therapy, physician assistant studies, public health, clinical psychology, athletic training and kinesiology. In addition to its degree offerings, the College offers post-professional residencies and fellowships and operates an on-site physical therapy clinic. With an overall enrollment of more than 700 students, the College seeks to improve the health and quality of life of individuals and society through excellence in teaching, research and service.

MERCER UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Mercer University Libraries seek to embody a patron-driven philosophy by practicing excellent customer service, making available learning-centered gateways of information resources, offering robust collections in support of the academic mission of the Mercer community and utilizing patron-driven materials acquisition models. The libraries provide a range of print materials and cloud-based resources such as e-books, e-journals, streaming media, research guides and how-to videos.

The libraries participate in the campus academic enterprise through virtual reference services, group information literacy sessions, one-on-one reference tutorials and the availability of cloud-based reference tools designed for 24/7 access. Library facilities contain multiple learning environments designed for mixed study scenarios, including comfortable spaces for group gatherings, quiet areas for individual work and private group study rooms for collaborative projects.

The Mercer University Libraries include:

- Jack Tarver Library, Macon
- Monroe F. Swilley, Jr. Library, Atlanta
- Regional Academic Center Library Services supporting programs in Henry County and Douglas County

Specialized libraries at Mercer:

- Skelton Medical Library serving students in Macon and Columbus
- Skelton Library in Savannah serving the School of Medicine on the Savannah campus and Memorial University Medical Center
- Furman Smith Law Library in the School of Law, Macon

MERCER MEDICINE

Mercer Medicine is a multi-specialty group of more than 30 primary care providers and specialists who work to guide patients through their health journey and create strong, long-term relationships. A wide variety of outpatient services are offered in Macon and at rural primary care clinics in multiple locations throughout Central and South Georgia, including Clay County, Harris County, Plains, Putnam County, Jekyll Island and Taylor County. As a subsidiary of the School of

Medicine, Mercer Medicine is staffed by experienced health care providers who are leading the way in medical education, technology and research.

MERCER ENGINEERING RESEARCH CENTER

Mercer Engineering Research Center (MERC) is the University's nonprofit applied research operating unit. Located in Warner Robins, MERC was established in 1987 to provide engineering and scientific services, research and specialized technical expertise to Robins Air Force Base, other Department of Defense (DoD) entities, DoD international partners and allies (Foreign Military Sales), as well as commercial customers. MERC's core competencies include electrical engineering, electronic warfare, digital transformation, artificial intelligence and machine learning, embedded software, custom software development, cybersecurity, computational fluid dynamics, human factors and biomechanics, finite element analysis, structural integrity, mechanical testing, non-destructive inspection, reverse engineering and prototyping.

MERCER UNIVERSITY PRESS

Mercer University Press has published more than 1,750 books since its establishment in 1979. It publishes 30 to 35 new books each year in the areas of religion, philosophy, literary criticism, Southern history, regional studies and creative writing. The Press holds membership in the Association of University Presses.

ROBERTS ACADEMY

Roberts Academy at Mercer University is Georgia's only school for dyslexic learners outside of Metro Atlanta. The mission of the Academy is to prepare students with dyslexia to achieve academic success through dynamic educational programs. The Academy teaches a comprehensive curriculum designed for students in grades 2-6 using the Orton-Gillingham Approach, an evidence-based practice proven to help students with dyslexia. Students attend the Academy until they have mastered the skills to accommodate their learning differences and are prepared to succeed in a traditional school setting.

ATHLETICS

Mercer is the only NCAA Division I private institution in Georgia and competes in the historic Southern Conference (SoCon). In the 2024-2025 academic year, Mercer student-athletes achieved an overall GPA of 3.491. The University has won the Southern Conference's Barrett-Bonner Award for academic achievement every year since joining the conference in 2014. Mercer's 18 intercollegiate teams include men's baseball, basketball, cross country, football, golf, lacrosse, soccer and tennis; and women's basketball, beach volleyball, cross country, golf, lacrosse, soccer, softball, tennis, track and volleyball. Other members of the Southern Conference include the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, East Tennessee State University, Furman University, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Samford University, The Citadel, Virginia Military Institute, Western Carolina University and Wofford College.

UNIVERSITY OFFICERS

Penny L. Elkins, *President*

Kathryn D. Kloepper <i>Chief of Staff</i>	Julia T. Davis <i>Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance</i>	Mary Bowman Hampton <i>Senior Vice President for University Marketing</i>	Douglas R. Pearson <i>Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students</i>
Lisa Murphey Lundquist <i>Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost</i>	Matthew R. Hall <i>Senior Vice President and General Counsel</i>	John A. Patterson <i>Senior Vice President for University Advancement</i>	William D. Underwood <i>Chancellor</i>
Kellie Raiford Appel <i>Senior Vice President for Strategic Initiatives and Atlanta Operations</i>	Maria Ann Hammett <i>Senior Vice President for Enrollment Management</i>	Keith E. Howard <i>Vice Provost</i>	R. Kirby Godsey <i>Chancellor Emeritus</i>

UNIVERSITY DEANS

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