



# *Commencement Exercise*

SATURDAY, MAY ELEVENTH  
TWO THOUSAND AND TWENTY-FOUR  
EIGHT O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING  
THE ROSA FREEMAN KELLER AVENUE OF THE OAKS



“*All* who teach and study within these walls were chosen because they are presumed to have pride in their heritage, pride in themselves and pride in their capability to achieve excellence in their chosen fields. Our abiding faith is that they also know... the pride that is grounded in achievement...”

Broadus N. Butler, Ph.D.  
President of Dillard University





## A BRIEF HISTORY OF DILLARD UNIVERSITY

Dating back to 1869, Dillard University was born from the union of two institutions that served as equity-building engines in the South. Those two institutions, New Orleans University and Straight University, met the demand to provide higher education for the influx of formerly enslaved people into New Orleans following the Civil War. Straight University was founded in 1869 with support from the American Missionary Association of the Congregational Church (now the United Church of Christ). Although New Orleans University was founded in 1873, its roots go back to Thompson Biblical Institute—founded in 1866—which later became a biblical department within Union Normal School in 1869, which was run by the Freedmen’s Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church (now the United Methodist Church), established to train African American teachers, providing a significant need throughout the South.

Straight quickly drew the attention of students from other parts of the southern United States, particularly because of their law and medical schools. The university withstood a wealth of adversity, including the main campus building being set ablaze and relocation, before becoming Straight College in 1905. However, so august was Straight’s academic programming that it produced such luminaries as: P.B.S. Pinchback, the first African American governor of Louisiana; social justice activists, Louis A. Martinet, Rodolphe L. Desdunes and Alice Dunbar Nelson; educators Fannie C. Williams and Valena C. Jones; and physician James W. Ames who founded the first hospital for African Americans in Detroit. New Orleans University was part of an ecosystem of institutions designed to educate and support African Americans. A significant part of that ecosystem was Flint Medical College, founded in 1889 to meet the demand for trained African American nurses. Later, New Orleans University absorbed Phyllis Wheatley Sanitarium. The sanitarium was renamed Sara Goodridge Nurse Training School which later joined Flint Medical College to become Flint-Goodridge Hospital in 1916.

Among other institutions that were part of this network was Gilbert Academy which was later incorporated into New Orleans University in 1919. Among New Orleans University’s notable alumni was Rev. John W.E. Bowen Sr., one of the first African Americans in the U.S. to earn a Ph.D. A combination of the rise of Jim Crow and World War I proved to be significant challenges for New Orleans University and Straight College, however. The boards of New Orleans University and Straight College agreed to continue the work of creating more African Americans leaders by consolidating. On June 6, 1930, the newly formed board of trustees proposed a charter for a new institution. The new University would be named for James Hardy Dillard, an educational reformer who promoted racial harmony. Opening its doors in 1935, Dillard began to write its legacy with impressive leadership and faculty. Will W. Alexander served as the University’s first acting president (1935-1936). Under his leadership, noted scholars filled the classrooms. Among them was S. Randolph Edmonds, regarded by many as the “dean of Black academic theater” and whose work led to the establishment of the first degree-granting theater program at an HBCU.

In 1936, William Stuart Nelson was appointed president, and his leadership laid the foundation for a tradition at Dillard that extends to the present day. He was instrumental in the implementation of a major arts festival which created a venue for local artists and national figures to enjoy and debate the nature of African American art, past, present and future. Nelson also worked with music instructor Frederick Douglass Hall to write the University’s alma mater, “Fair Dillard.” In 1941, Albert W. Dent was named Dillard’s second president and his legendary tenure lasted until 1969. Having served as the superintendent of Flint-Goodridge Hospital, Dent guided Dillard through turbulent decades. Still, he made remarkable strides.



Having declared that “a nursing program in Dillard University should develop better persons as well as better nurses,” the University became the first institution of higher learning in Louisiana to establish an accredited baccalaureate program in nursing. Dent was also responsible for Dillard becoming a founding member of the United Negro College Fund in 1944. Under Dent, Dillard’s national and international profile as a liberal arts institution grew. Dillard also came to play a role as one of New Orleans’ critical civic anchors. Behind the scenes, Dent played a part in negotiating race relations throughout the city. He worked with Mayor deLesseps S. Morrison on desegregating New Orleans’ public services while promoting University events that spoke to Black identity and pride. Most notable of those events was Dillard’s 1968 Festival of Afro-American Arts.

Dr. Broadus N. Butler’s appointment in 1969 as Dillard’s third president marked, for the University, a renewed commitment to the liberal arts. Butler’s most important contribution is considered to be the implementation of the Scholars–Statesman Lecture Series which was housed in the Division of Social Sciences. The series was designed to “bring to the presence of Dillard University students and the New Orleans community a series of men and women who have made distinctive achievements in their own lives and who are themselves living models of the kind of excellence to which our students aspire and which our community should always respect.” The lecture series brought to campus key figures such as Benjamin Elijah Mays, Etta Moten Barnett, Aaron Douglas and Arna Bontemps. However, with the board of trustees’ desire to transform the University’s curriculum to meet the changing student body, Butler made the decision to resign in November 1973.

In 1974, Dillard would see another leader begin a legendary tenure. Dr. Samuel DuBois Cook became the University’s fourth president, strengthening and expanding the curriculum, increasing the percentage of faculty members holding doctoral degrees, raising the requirements for admission and eventually increasing student enrollment by 50 percent. During that time, in 1979, Dillard became the first university in Louisiana to offer a bachelor’s degree in public health. Cook’s leadership also led to an expansion of student services and an increase in fundraising to improve the campus and facilities. In 1989, he created the Dillard University National Conference on Black-Jewish Relations from which sprang the Dillard University National Center for Black-Jewish Relations. With a desire to expand students’ global view, the University added a Japanese studies program in 1990, the first of its kind at an HBCU. Most notably, Dillard’s endowment grew from \$5 million to more than \$40 million under Cook’s leadership. Following Cook’s historic run, Dr. Michael L. Lomax became Dillard University’s fifth president. A noted scholar, administrator, political leader and entrepreneur, Lomax undertook the challenge to transform the University into one of the finest liberal arts colleges in the nation. He led a \$60 million campus renovation program to focus on students’ living and learning environments. Enrollment increased 49 percent, reaching more than 2,200 students from the U.S., the Caribbean and Africa. Having also tripled alumni, individual, corporate and foundation giving, Lomax helped Dillard reach a U.S. News & World Report ranking of 20th in the top tier of colleges and universities in the South by 2002. In 2004, Lomax decided that it was time to move on to a new assignment, accepting the position of CEO and president of UNCF.

On July 1, 2005, Dr. Marvalene Hughes began her tenure as the sixth and first woman to serve as president of Dillard University. Barely allowed to settle in at Dillard, Hughes was faced with the threat of Hurricane Katrina just over a month after beginning her tenure. Amid the well-documented destruction that Katrina caused, Hughes facilitated, with unwavering determination, the rebuilding of Dillard’s historic, 55-acre campus. In the first year of Hughes’ tenure, and again in 2006, the University raised more than \$34 million in public and private gifts and grants, far exceeding any previous annual total in Dillard’s history.



In 2008, Dillard launched its first capital campaign, Advantage Dillard!, with a goal of raising \$70 million for six priority areas: increasing student scholarships; enhancing teaching, learning, and campus facilities; introducing cutting-edge technology; enhancing the library; strengthening general program support; and securing Dillard's future through general endowment.

Following the Class of 2010's commencement exercises, Hughes cut the ribbons for two exciting new facilities, the Professional Schools and Sciences Building and the Student Union and Health and Wellness Center. With tremendous service having been rendered to Dillard University, Hughes transitioned from the presidency in 2011.

On July 1, 2012, Dr. Walter Kimbrough became Dillard's seventh president. Having earned the moniker "The Hip Hop Prez" during his tenure as the president of Philander Smith College, Kimbrough's dynamic presence played a role in raising the profile of Dillard as it continued to recover from Hurricane Katrina. One of his most significant accomplishments was having a \$160 million Hurricane Katrina loan from the federal government forgiven in 2018. That paved the way for the University's endowment to grow from \$48 million to \$105 million. Also impressive was the alumni giving rate reaching 23 percent. Academically, Kimbrough turned his attention to several programs. In 2012, the University introduced its film studies program, a response to the number of "Hollywood South" film and television productions in Louisiana. By 2018, Dillard's physics program had become known for being a top producer of African American physics graduates. The University also began to experience success in its pre-law program. In 2021, 93 percent of the pre-law students who applied for law schools had been accepted. Kimbrough's work also left a significant fundraising mark on Dillard. The University received its largest single alumni gift—\$1 million from Jimmie Edwards. Dillard also received its single largest private gift when philanthropist MacKenzie Scott donated \$5 million in 2020. A year later, alumnus and board of trustees chair, Michael D. Jones facilitated a \$5 million gift to the newly established Center for Racial Justice with the help of the law firm Kirkland and Ellis. Even further leveraging the power and influence of social media, Dillard utilized GivingTuesday as a fundraising opportunity, going from more than \$64,000 in gifts in 2016 to more than \$1.3 million in 2021. Feeling that his work at Dillard had been done, Kimbrough announced in August of 2021 that he would hand off the "leadership baton."

Dr. Rochelle L. Ford, the highly energetic dean of Elon University's School of Communications, became Dillard's eighth president on July 1, 2022. Upon her arrival, Ford immediately got to work under the theme "Activating our Commitment." Driven by the University's mission to "cultivate leaders who live ethically, think and communicate precisely, and act courageously to make the world a better place," Dr. Ford identified three key areas, dubbed the DU3, that will solidify Dillard's status as not only the HBCU of choice, but more specifically, the University of Choice in Louisiana. They are: Facilities that Withstand the Forecast, Faculty and Staff Fortification, and Financing the Future.

Within her first two weeks of office, Dr. Ford launched an online feedback forum where faculty and staff openly shared their visions, concerns, and support for the University. The suggestions, memories, and stories, continue to inspire her to carry out Dillard's mission. A true visionary and president who leads by example, Dr. Ford set a personal goal of completing 100 major accomplishments within her first 100 days in office. Not only did she meet that goal, she surpassed it ahead of her self-imposed deadline. She works diligently with the Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, students, alums and community leaders to gather information and direction that will empower her with tools and strategies needed to prioritize the next steps that will propel the University to an unparalleled level of distinction.



# ORDER OF EXERCISES

Presiding  
Monique Guillory, Ph.D.  
Provost and Chief Academic & Enrollment Officer

CALL TO ORDER

Eartha L. Johnson '80, Ed. D.  
Dean of Faculty and Student Academic Services  
& Assistant Provost for Academic Affairs

PROCESSIONAL

"Pomp and Circumstance"

arr: Eugene Thomas  
S. Carver Davenport, Keyboardist

THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

"The Star Spangled Banner"  
Zaria Ivory '24, Leader

Francis Scott Key

LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING

Dillard University Concert Choir  
Dr. Hezekiah Brinson Accompanist  
Dr. S. Carver Davenport, Director

J. Rosamond Johnson  
arr: Kurt Franklin/Roland M. Carter

Lyrics on page 24

INVOCATION

Rev. Herbert Brisbon III  
University Chaplain

GREETINGS

Rochester Anderson '84  
Board of Trustees First Vice Chair

MUSICAL SELECTION

"For Every Mountain"  
Dillard University Concert Choir  
A'Layjah Alexander '24, Soprano

arr: Kurt Carr

SPEAKER INTRODUCTION

Sanaa Bradley '24  
Senior Class Representative

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

Ayo Davis '98  
President, Disney Branded Television

MUSICAL SELECTION

"Circle of Life"  
Dillard University Concert Choir  
Zaria Ivory '24, Contralto  
Dr. S. Carver Davenport, Accompanist

From Disney's 1994 Animated Feature Film  
"The Lion King" Composed by Elton John  
Lyrics by Tim Rice

RECOGNITION OF TOP GRADUATES

Monique Guillory, Ph.D.  
Provost and Chief Academic & Enrollment Officer

GOLDEN CITATIONS PRESENTATION  
50th Anniversary Reunion Class of 1974

Stephanie K. Rogers, B.S.  
Executive Vice President for Institutional Advancement



# ORDER OF EXERCISES

CONFERRING OF BACCALAUREATE DEGREES

Rochelle L. Ford, Ph.D., APR  
University President

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES - Eric Buckles, Ph.D., Associate Provost & Dean  
Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS - Dorian Williams, Ph.D., Dean  
Bachelor of Science

COLLEGE OF NURSING - Sharon Hutchinson, Ph.D., Dean  
Bachelor of Science in Nursing

HONORARY DEGREE CONFERRAL

Rochelle L. Ford, Ph.D., APR  
University President

Warren A. Bell Jr.  
Ayo Davis '98  
Edgar F. Poree Jr.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION INDUCTION

Tiffani C. Moore '02  
National Alumni Association President

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND RECOGNITIONS

Rochelle L. Ford, Ph.D., APR  
University President

\*ALMA MATER

*Fair Dillard*  
Covay Joseph '24, Leader

Words: William Stuart Nelson  
Music: Frederick Douglass Hall  
Dr. Hezekiah Brinson, Accompanist

\*BENEDICTION

Rev. Herbert Brisbon III  
University Chaplain

MUSICAL RESPONSE

"Fare Ye Well"  
Dillard University Concert Choir  
Dr. S. Carver Davenport, Leader

arr. S. Carver Davenport

RECESSIONAL

"War March of the Priests"

Felix Mendelssohn  
S. Carver Davenport, Keyboardist

The audience is requested to remain seated during the processional and recessional. The taking of photographs and videotaping during the ceremony is restricted to news outlets and university officials.

\*Those who are able, please stand.



## AYO DAVIS '98

### COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER & HONORARY DEGREE RECIPIENT



Davis is president of Disney Branded Television, the unit of Disney Entertainment Television that creates premium original content for kids and families for Disney+, Disney Junior and Disney Channel. In this role, Davis leads development, current, production, casting and business affairs for the group's expansive slate of live-action, unscripted and animated entertainment.

Since being named to this role in 2021, Davis has led one of the industry's most successful and award-winning slates for kids, from preschool hits like "Bluey," the most-watched series for Kids 2-11 in 2023, "Marvel's Spidey and his Amazing Friends," and "Superkitties," 2023's No. 1 most-watched new series for Kids 2-5 – to popular programs for Kids 9-14, like "Kiff," "Raven's Home," and the ever-popular "ZOMBIES" and "Descendants" franchises. As a result, Disney Branded Television content helped keep Disney Junior the #1 preschool network for the 11th straight year in 2023, and Disney Channel the #1 cable network for Girls 6-11 for 18 consecutive years.

Davis' team is also behind some of Disney+'s most successful original series, movies and specials, from global sensation "Percy Jackson and the Olympians," which was one of the top streaming premieres of 2023, to hit series "Goosebumps," and major musical events like the Emmy® Award-winning "Elton John Live: Farewell from Dodger Stadium."

Under Davis' leadership, Disney Branded Television earned an industry-leading 74 nominations and 14 wins at the 2023 Children's and Family Emmys Awards; eight nominations and three wins for the 75th Primetime Emmy Awards; a 2024 Academy Award® nomination for Sean Wang's documentary short "Ni Nai & Wai Pó;" a 2023 Academy Award nomination for Alfonso Cuarón's live-action short "Le Pupille," and numerous others.

Davis has attracted some of the industry's top creative talent to overalls with Disney Branded Television, including Tim Federle ("High School Musical: The Musical: The Series"), Bruce W. Smith and Ralph Farquhar ("The Proud Family: Louder and Prouder"), Chris and Shane Houghton ("Big City Greens") and Dan Povenmire ("Phineas and Ferb," "Hamster & Gretel").

A 20+-year veteran of The Walt Disney Company, Davis' prior roles included EVP, Creative Development and Strategy at Disney Branded Television from 2020-2021; and before that, she was EVP, Talent and Casting at ABC Entertainment and Disney+. There, she played an integral role in acclaimed series including "Desperate Housewives" and "black-ish," and championed the careers of notable actors such as Viola Davis, Eva Longoria, and Lupita Nyong'o.

Davis is a member of the board of trustees of Dillard University, a member of Jack and Jill of America Inc., and served as a member of the host committee board of Girls Inc. She has been named as a Multichannel News Wonder Woman and featured on Variety's Family Entertainment Impact list as well as The Hollywood Reporter's Women in Entertainment Power 100 list and 75 Most Powerful People in Kids' Entertainment list.

Davis received a Bachelor of Arts degree in communications from Dillard University.



# WARREN A. BELL JR.

## HONORARY DEGREE RECIPIENT



**W**arren A. Bell Jr. is a New Orleans native with a long-established presence in broadcast media as a TV & Radio news anchor, news manager and talk show host, in addition to producing numerous documentaries on critical topics over those years. Bell anchored his first radio news broadcast in 1968 at WYLD-AM while still attending St. Augustine High School. By 1977 the Yale University graduate ('73, Afro American Studies) had returned home making local broadcasting history as New Orleans' first Black weekday prime-time TV News anchor at WDSU-TV (1974-1980) plus stints at WGNO-TV as Public Affair Director, Host of WYES-TV "Informed Sources" and Senior News anchor (1987-94) at WVUE-TV. During subsequent career stops at WYLD Radio where his career began, Bell established its award-winning News & Public Affairs tradition. Mr. Bell also served in multiple Higher Education and media consulting roles. Serving first in the classroom as an adjunct instructor

(1983-2000) then as Director of Dillard University's Mass Communication Division. Next as an Associate V.P. for University & Media Relations (2003-2011) at Xavier University of Louisiana. His last HBCU assignment came as Founding Director of the Honoré Center for Undergraduate Student Achievement (2012-2017) a program established by Southern University to recruit young men from underserved NOLA communities for support to develop them of New Orleans. In August 2023 he received the New Orleans Association of Black Journalists LEGACY Award. Bell has received numerous other local and regional awards for service as well as his journalistic efforts over a 50-year career. He just released a TV documentary for 2024. Buried History: Finding Our Past tells his personal story of learning more about his own family history while taking over a neglected family tomb -- but more importantly, to showcase an even richer neglected history of the achievements of Free Blacks in New Orleans dating back before the Civil War.

Bell is married, a proud father of four daughters, and a doting "Papa Bell" to five grandchildren.

He remains an active member and Lector at St. Peter Claver Catholic Church in the Tremé area, where his family's Afro-Creole roots date back over 150 years.



## EDGAR F. POREE JR.

### HONORARY DEGREE RECIPIENT



**E**dgar F. Poree Jr. earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in education from Xavier University of Louisiana in 1958. He was also a Fellow of Tulane University's Issues Forum, Loyola University's Institute of Politics, and Louisiana State University's Executive Program.

While working as a sixth grade teacher in the New Orleans Public School System, Mr. Poree submitted a Comprehensive strategic revenue proposal to the school district, which was adopted as the district's Strategic One-Cent Sales Tax Campaign Plan. In the summer of 1966, Poree was appointed Director of Total Community Action's Neighborhood Youth Corp and Anti-Poverty Initiative. The US Department of Labor adopted his youth development handbook as the Southwest Region's official handbook. In the fall of 1971, Poree was appointed Staff Manager of Operator Services for South Central Bell Telephone Company. In that role, he was responsible for a thirty-member management team, and 260 Operators.

In 1986, Poree was promoted to District Manager of Corporate and Community Affairs of BellSouth Telecommunications, and served as Chief Spokesperson for BellSouth in Metro-New Orleans. Since his retirement in 2001, Mr. Poree has remained active in business, educational, civic and community affairs, serving on numerous boards and committees including: Tulane University's A.B. Freeman Business Council, UNO Business Council, SUNO Foundation, Downtown Development District, Advisory Board of Louisiana Colleges, Dryades Street YMCA, Downtown Rotary, Salvation Army, New Orleans Symphony Orchestra, and Bethany United Methodist Church Administrative Board.

Mr. Poree has received numerous awards and recognitions for outstanding community service, and has served as guest lecturer, motivational, and commencement speaker for business, religious, educational, social and community events throughout the state.

Edgar F. Poree, Jr. was married to the late Gloria Guichard, is the father of Deidra Poree Pierre and Edgar, III. He is the grandfather of Troy Pierre, II and Alexis Pierre, and is father-in-law of Tyra Mitchell Poree.



## CLASS OF 1974

Linda Beth Aldridge  
Debra Ann Alexander  
Charles Edward Allen  
Sharon Val Allen  
Mary Lewis Amiker  
Carmen Marie Andrews  
Sylvia Rozalia Andrews  
Eudith B. Austin  
Brenda Ann Ayio  
Gwenevere Fashawn Baker  
Julida Diaz Barard  
Marlis Irene Barrow  
Cassandra Deborah Beal  
Yvonne Williams Ben  
Alexander Berkley  
Avis Ann Bethancourt  
Jeraldine Betts  
Jolyne Biagas  
Denise Marva Blackman  
Ona Donita Bloom  
Cynthia Bradley  
Carol Ann Brady  
Cheryl Lyn Branche  
Barbara Ann Brock  
Brenda Lavaunce Brock  
Gregory Bruno  
Michael Louis Burrell  
Cecil Burroughs  
Fredward Fayson Capers  
Williamenia Carter  
Amadee Joseph Castenell  
Victoria Champion  
Debra Eve Chase  
Cordelia Clark  
Quincy Darnell Corey  
Ronald Elliott Crier  
Rhonda Cecilia Cunningham  
Billie Jean Daily  
William Hebert Davis  
Harmon Joseph DeBose  
Carolyn Lorraine Dixon  
Alwyn Dowell  
Beverly Ann Doyle

Charles Lionel Ducre III  
Bertram Jerome Dupont  
Andrea Dupre  
Rose Maria Eady  
Wilken P. Eden  
Meredith Jean Emmons  
Patricia Ann Filer  
Carolyn Virginia Ford  
Eileen Asandra Frank  
Wilbert J. Galleaud  
Thelma Garner  
Sherridell Gills  
Gerald N. Gordon  
Greer Gray  
Lonzie Greene  
David L. Grillier  
Hayes Grooms  
Carol Yvonne Guyton  
Milton Clarence Guzman  
Melba Anne Harbor  
Myra Jean Hambrick  
Jan Garcia Hardaman  
Calvin Rudolph Harris  
Harrietta Ruth Harris  
Isaiah L. Harris Jr.  
Sandra Aquanetta Harris  
Pamela Augusta Haynes  
Paulette Marie Hebert  
Henri Faye Henderson  
Rose Marie Hersey  
Carol Ann Hicks  
Lynn Marie Hicks  
Ronald Alfred Hill  
Lottie Dell Hilton  
Mildred Marie Hobley  
Pamela Yolanda Hollins  
Barbara Ann Holt  
Emmitt Leonard Hood  
Woodrow Wilson Howard Jr.  
Janice Marie Hudson  
Brenda Lynette Hunter  
Loisel Joseph Isidore Jr.  
Debra Dejoin Jackson

Tahnelle Roberson Jackson  
Willie Larry Jackson  
Eddie Lee Jakes  
Connie Louise James  
Johnetta Marie James  
Alfreda Anise Jenkins  
Althea Denise Jenkins  
Claudia Etha Johnson  
Luenette Celestine Johnson  
Sandra Susan Johnson  
Sylvia Moore Johnson  
Anita Jennifer Jones  
Glenn Reginald Joseph  
Debra Ann Key  
Grace Joann King  
Louis Edward Laurent  
Alexis Yvonne Lewis  
Dolda Cooper Lewis  
Gloria Marie Lewis  
Janice Marie Loving  
Yolanda Faye Lundy  
Gloria Jean Magee  
Lydia Alicia Manuel  
Dwight Cornel Martin  
Tanya Mae Menendez  
Carrie Smith McGathon  
Janice Arlevia Miller  
Darrel Joseph Mitchell  
Deborah Lilata Montgomery  
Wilbur Dexter Moore Jr.  
Martha Grace Morris  
Sandra Laverne Morris  
Veronica Erlean Motley  
Chester Mitchell Nevels  
Clifton Earl Nicholson  
Alma Nixon  
Barbara Ann Nixon  
Beverly Taylor Patin  
Leala Salter Perkins  
Roslyn Lavon Perkins  
Barbara Trotter Phillips  
Anita Marie Pichon  
Marilyn Dolores Pichon



## CLASS OF 1974

Voynn Scheryl Pittman  
Patricia Elaine Reed  
Samuel Matthew Richburg  
Judy Gail Riley  
Cynthia Ann Robertson  
Donald Lawrence Robinson  
Regina Royal  
Alinda Ann Rush  
Thelma Lee Russell  
Fred Estaire Scott  
Freida Hodges Scott  
Glenn Bernard Sergeant  
Sandra Elaine Sharett  
Tyrone Timothy Shortt  
Freida Brooks Singleton  
Jacqueline Adele Slaughter  
Earlean Collins Smiley  
Charssie Vernett Smith  
Clara Marie Smith  
Joan Caron Smith  
Olivia Adele Snodgrass  
Huey Richard Sorapuru  
Debra Ann Sterling  
Gwendolyn Mary Tartt  
Tracy Anthony Thibodeaux  
Elnathan Joseph Thronton  
Rhonda Eileen Timpton  
Yuhon D. Torrance  
Glenn Gregory Troullier  
Francine Renee Turner  
Lionel John Tyran  
Patricia Ann Varnado  
Barbara Elaine Vinson  
Debra Eileen Wallace  
Albert Preston Walters  
Earl Washington Jr.  
Patricia Ann Washington  
Patricia Vaniece Washington  
Ruben Washington Jr.  
Brenda Joyce Watts  
Nettie Marie Watts  
Lovie Lee Wells Jr.

Francine Regina Wheeler  
Helen Elizabeth White  
James Michael White  
James Wesley Whitfield  
Irene Hughes Williams  
Joyce McAlister Williams  
Joycelyn Marie Williams  
Melvin Williams  
Montez Bryant Williams  
Ulysses Williams  
Frances Bastian Willis  
Stanley Kenneth Willis  
Bobby Glenn Wilson  
Gary Randolph Wilson  
Hazel Mae Wilson  
Naomi Wilson  
Mary Davis Winfield  
Charity Delois Woulard  
Wilbert Anthony Young





# HONORS

George Angel Alvarez, Valedictorian  
Ashley Sarah Brown, Valedictorian  
Travionne Montrell Bob, Valedictorian

Rajah Lynn Thomas, Valedictorian  
Callia Jonét Thompson, Valedictorian

Covay Malik Joseph, Salutatorian

## COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Aaliyah Gladys Laverne Ali, Cum Laude  
Yasziara Sajacity Anderson, Summa Cum Laude  
Bailey Nicole Auzenne, Magna Cum Laude  
Mary Elizabeth Banks, Magna Cum Laude  
Kiarston Rebecca Blackman, Magna Cum Laude  
Travionne Montrell Bob, Summa Cum Laude  
Chancie Reynae Bouton, Cum Laude  
T'Aneka Brenai Bowers, Cum Laude  
Treasure Yovanni Boykin, Cum Laude  
Ashley Sarah Brown, Summa Cum Laude  
Joi Leigh Brumfield, Cum Laude  
Torri Annette Burgess, Magna Cum Laude  
Tyra Tianna Clark, Magna Cum Laude  
Erika Diaz, Cum Laude  
Kendall Selah Dolo, Cum Laude  
Jordan Alexis Donegan, Summa Cum Laude  
Justin Cleghorn Dorsey, Cum Laude  
Malik Jameel Durant, Summa Cum Laude  
Tyler James Finley, Cum Laude  
Kyle Bryan Fulton, Magna Cum Laude  
Justin Donald Harris, Cum Laude  
J'Brionne Michaelé Helaire, Summa Cum Laude  
Taylor Trinity Hurst, Cum Laude  
Rachel Tayler Jackson, Magna Cum Laude  
Ashira Ashanti Jones, Cum Laude  
Covay Malik Joseph, Summa Cum Laude  
Judeline Joseph, Summa Cum Laude  
Hildevert Promesse Lafeuille, Magna Cum Laude  
Nya Jazmin Love, Cum Laude  
Aubri Racquel Magee, Magna Cum Laude  
Alanni Devonne Martin, Cum Laude  
Kyla Danae' Mayo, Magna Cum Laude  
Shomar Alexander Michael, Magna Cum Laude  
Isabel Adorie Mitchell-Starks, Summa Cum Laude  
Nicholas Louie Pena, Magna Cum Laude  
Tia Renee' Perry, Cum Laude  
Marissa Elizabeth Pittman, Summa Cum Laude

Kiarra Denise Riek, Cum Laude  
Autumn Elise-Kennedy Ryan, Cum Laude  
Shermaine Paul Scipio, Summa Cum Laude  
Ajayah Shalarion Simpson, Cum Laude  
Julian Michael Smith, Cum Laude  
Tyronae J. Smith, Summa Cum Laude  
Rajah Lynn Thomas, Summa Cum Laude  
Callia Jonét Thompson, Summa Cum Laude  
Lena Maxine Uddyback, Cum Laude  
Brynn Olivia Warren, Magna Cum Laude  
Christa T'le Wheeler, Cum Laude  
Aniya Ky'Essence White, Cum Laude  
Lexus Williams, Cum Laude  
Cheyenne Nicole Wood, Cum Laude

## COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Mobolaji Iyioluwa Adesoga, Cum Laude  
George Angel Alvarez, Summa Cum Laude  
Raegan Shianne Bramlett, Summa Cum Laude  
Tremayne Gerard Brown Jr., Cum Laude  
Brionne Arije' Alexis Brumfield, Summa Cum Laude  
David Martin DeJohn, Cum Laude  
Kennedi Armani Franklin, Magna Cum Laude  
Denisha Nicole Hymes, Summa Cum Laude  
Sydni Rae John-Baptiste, Cum Laude  
A'Keria Markelle Lowe, Cum Laude  
Akilah Grace Northern, Magna Cum Laude  
Nadia Elise Patterson, Summa Cum Laude  
Tahagie Jamie Smith, Cum Laude  
Brea N. Wash, Magna Cum Laude

## COLLEGE OF NURSING

Jada Cierra Allen, Cum Laude  
Markeyah Armauri Moore, Magna Cum Laude  
Katelyn Shonell Shelby, Cum Laude

Summa Cum Laude (Highest Honors) - Graduates having earned a cumulative grade point average of 3.88 or higher for the entire undergraduate course of study.

Magna Cum Laude (High Honors) - Graduates having earned a cumulative grade point average of 3.76 to 3.87 for entire undergraduate course of study.

Cum Laude (Honors) - Graduates having earned a cumulative grade point average of 3.50 to 3.75 for the entire undergraduate course of study.



## PRIZES AND AWARDS

THE BENJAMIN E. MAYS - SAMUEL DUBOIS COOK PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARSHIP is a \$750 award presented annually to the top graduating senior who has maintained an exemplary academic record and who will pursue further study in graduate or professional school.

**Recipients: George Alvarez, Ashley Brown, Travionne Bob, Rajah Thomas, and Callia Thompson**

THE MICHAEL L. LOMAX PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARSHIP is a \$500 award presented annually to the Salutatorian of the class for having maintained an exemplary academic record.

**Recipients: Covay Joseph**

THE WILLIAM SUTTON PRIZE is presented annually to a graduating senior who best combines the ideals of scholarship, leadership, citizenship and friendship. Each recipient receives a \$1,000 award.

**Recipient: Isabel Mitchell-Starks**

THE WALTER J. BARKER PRIZE is a \$750 award presented annually to a graduating senior who persevered in spite of handicaps, lack of sufficient funds, challenges and personal tragedy.

**Recipient: Jaren Barnes**

THE ROCHESTER 'ROCK' ANDERSON AWARD is a \$1000 award presented annually to a graduating senior who persevered in spite of lack of sufficient funds, challenges and personal tragedy.

**Recipient: Jamiah Jones**

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Mobolaji Iyioluwa Adesoga  
Business Administration

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Accounting

George Angel Alvarez  
Business Administration

Raegan Shianne Bramlett  
Accounting

Nadia Elise Patterson  
Accounting

Anginique Rachel Andrews  
Business Administration

Kennedi Armani Franklin  
Accounting

Raven Lashawn Square  
Accounting

Jeremiah August  
Business Administration

Sydni Rae John-Baptiste  
Accounting

Brea N. Wash  
Accounting

Tremayne Gerard Brown Jr.  
Business Administration



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Business Administration

Alyssah Catherine Darden  
Business Administration

Keirston Ra'Shon Davis  
Business Administration

David Martin DeJohn  
Business Administration

Raja Abdullah Dobard  
Business Administration

Imani Sabre Francis  
Business Administration

Jahnia Alexis Garner  
Business Administration

Nobie Noadiah Harris  
Business Administration

Javonna Ane' Holmes  
Business Administration

Denisha Nicole Hymes  
Business Administration

Voncile Byrd Johnson  
Business Administration

Alana Iman Matthews  
Business Administration

Akilah Grace Northern  
Business Administration

Janea Tiffany Seaton  
Business Administration

Sierra Sky Sellers  
Business Administration

Tahagie Jamie Smith  
Business Administration

Tiara Angel Wooden  
Business Administration

## COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES BACHELOR OF ARTS

Darynaisha Shava Crawford  
Chemistry

Madison Denise Finley  
Chemistry

Zharia Bernice Armstrong  
Criminal Justice

Mary Elizabeth Banks  
Criminal Justice

Fabiana Nicole Bonilla-Robles  
Criminal Justice

Brionne Bobbie Brister \*\*  
Criminal Justice

Jacob Dylan Bush  
Criminal Justice

Anaya Alexandra Duncan  
Criminal Justice

Ashley Patrice Ephrim  
Criminal Justice

Khalia Danielle Gilner  
Criminal Justice

Marquise Dejuan Hall  
Criminal Justice

Jaimonie My'chael Leidale Hanes  
Criminal Justice

Ke'Yona Danee' Herbert  
Criminal Justice

Feltise Martin Jones Jr.  
Criminal Justice

Tashae Ashona Joseph  
Criminal Justice

Amyrah Lashea Long  
Criminal Justice

Diamond'Neil Dontrell Miner  
Criminal Justice

Nicholas Louie Pena  
Criminal Justice

Kiarra Denise Riek  
Criminal Justice

Shermaine Paul Scipio  
Criminal Justice

Callia Jonét Thompson  
Criminal Justice



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Jasmine Renee White Criminal Justice	Kaleb McClendon Film	Braxton Turk** Mass Communication
Cheyenne Nicole Wood Criminal Justice	Juwan Xavier Saintcharles Film	Cherrelle Symone Turner Mass Communication
Justin Cleghorn Dorsey English	Brynn Olivia Warren Film	DeVonte' Jamal Williams Mass Communication
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Ashira Ashanti Jones English	Ever Andrew Winston Film	A'layjah Alexis Alexander Music
Aaliyah Gladys Laverne Ali Film	Chancie Reynae Bouton Mass Communication	Karen Anderson Music
Brooklyn Linee Anderson Film	Jalana Erica Butler** Mass Communication	Sanaa Breanne Bradley Music
Ashley Sarah Brown Film	Rainn Yolanda Simone Crowder Mass Communication	Jhanaiajia RaeJean Daughtrey Music
Kendall Selah Dolo Film	Mahri Lanea Hatcher Mass Communication	Zaria LaShay Ivory Music
Kyle Bryan Fulton Film	J'Brionne Michaelé Helaire** Mass Communication	Covay Malik Joseph Music
Nysa Jolie Dobson-Muhammad Film	Lauren Kenyatta Jones Mass Communication	Lyrik Lazard Music
Hildevert Promesse Lafeuille Film	Autumn Elise-Kennedy Ryan Mass Communication	Zoe Allen Political Science



# 2024 CANDIDATES FOR BACCALAUREATE DEGREES

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T'Aneka Brenai Bowers  
Psychology

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Political Science

Joi Leigh Brumfield  
Psychology

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Syerra Aleya Duplessis  
Political Science

Eve Caroline Chambers  
Psychology

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Political Science

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Psychology

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Political Science

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Psychology

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Biology

Erika Diaz  
Computer Science

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Visual Arts

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Biology

Malik Jameel Durant  
Computer Science

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Landon Johnson  
Computer Science

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Biology

Kyla Danae' Mayo  
Biology

Khyndal Leigh Patterson  
Computer Science

Kaya Nicole Black  
Biology

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Biology

Eric Wilkinson-Hickson  
Computer Science

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Computer Science

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Indica Ecada Hampton  
A'Maiya Monique Harris  
Tamia Ashley Hightower  
Jade A'kilah Holcomb  
Jessica Simone' James  
Samire Nichelle Jordan  
Markeyah Armauri Moore  
Katelyn Shonell Shelby  
Chantrice Cenetha Thomas

Because circumstances require the list of graduates is furnished to the printing company in final form weeks prior to Commencement, it is possible some candidates who completed course requirements are not listed, and some candidates who did not complete requirements are listed. Therefore, the appearance of a name in this program is presumptive evidence of graduation, but must not be regarded as conclusive. The degree of the University, signed and sealed by its proper officers, remains the official artifact demonstrating conferral of the degree.

\*Degree conferred Summer 2023

\*\*Degree conferred Fall 2023



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## ACADEMIC HERALDRY

**T**he history of traditional academic dress is traced to the 12th century when Oxford University was founded and to the medieval European universities of the 14th century. Although European universities follow varied patterns in cut and color of gown and type of head dress, academic dress at American colleges and universities is fairly standardized.

The traditional academic gown is usually black. The pattern varies with the degrees held. The bachelor's gown has a simple design, with long, pointed sleeves as its distinguishing mark. The master's gown has oblong sleeves with the rear cut square and the front featuring a cutaway arc.

The most elaborate academic costume is the doctoral gown, with velvet panels down the front and three velvet bars across the sleeves. The velvet is usually black, but it may be a color designating the subject to which the degree pertains.

The hood of the doctoral gown features velvet trimmings, the width of which designates the level of the degree. The color of the hood indicates the major field of study, and its lining identifies the institution that granted the degree. Dillard's doctoral gown is navy blue with front panels and four cobalt blue chevrons trimmed in metallic gold.

*The following colors are associated with the various academic disciplines:*

Agriculture **Maize**

Arts, Letters, Humanities **White**

Commerce, Accountancy,

Business **Drab**

Dentistry **Lilac**

Economics **Copper**

Education **Light Blue**

Engineering **Orange**

Fine Arts, including

Architecture **Brown**

Forestry **Russet**

Journalism **Crimson**

Law **Purple**

Library Science **Lemon**

Medicine **Green**

Music **Pink**

Nursing **Apricot**

Optometry **Sea Foam Green**

Oratory **Silver Gray**

Pharmacy **Olive Green**

Philosophy **Dark Blue**

Physical Education **Sage Green**

Podiatry, Chiropody **Nile Green**

Public Administration, including Foreign

Service **Peacock Blue**

Public Health **Salmon Pink**

Science **Golden Yellow**

Social Work **Citron**

Theology **Scarlet**

Veterinary Science **Gray**



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Internal Auditor and Interim Vice President for Business and  
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**Ceeon Quiett Smith, Ph.D.**  
Executive Vice President for Student Success and Operations

**Brendan Greene, J.D.**  
General Counsel



# LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING

JAMES WELDON JOHNSON & J. ROSAMOND JOHNSON

Lift every voice and sing, till earth and heaven ring  
Ring with the harmonies of liberty  
Let our rejoicing rise high as the list'ning skies  
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.  
Sing a song, full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,  
Sing a song, full of the hope that the present has brought us;  
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,  
Let us march on 'til victory is won.

Stony the road we trod, bitter the chastening rod,  
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;  
Yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet  
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?  
We have come, over a way that with tears has been watered,  
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the  
slaughtered,  
Out from the gloomy past, til now we stand at last  
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years. God of our silent tears  
Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;  
Thou who has by Thy might, led us into the light,  
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.  
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee  
Lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee  
Shadowed beneath Thy hand, may we forever stand  
True to our God, true to our native land.

# FAIR DILLARD

WILLIAM STUART NELSON & FREDERICK D. HALL

Fair Dillard,  
Gleaming white and spacious green,  
We love thy every blade and tree;  
We love thy breathless days, thy nights serene,  
Thy halls where men are men and free.  
Arise, O sons and daughters, hail thy queen,  
And pledge for aye thy loyalty.

Fair Dillard,  
Flaming love and learning's light,  
Teach us each day, each passing hour.  
A deep'ning love for beauty, truth, and right.  
Source of all nobleness and pow'r.  
And through the joyous day, the dreaded night,  
Forever guide, Alma Mater!  
Forever guide, Alma Mater!



# NOTES

