



UNIVERSITY *of* MARYLAND
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Convocation

FRIDAY, MAY 15, 2026
11 A.M.

SECU ARENA
TOWSON UNIVERSITY

20
26

ORDER OF CEREMONY

Welcome and Acknowledgements

Judy L. Postmus, PhD, ACSW

Dean and Professor, University of Maryland School of Social Work

Conferral of Degrees

Bruce E. Jarrell, MD, FACS

President, University of Maryland, Baltimore

Convocation Student Speaker

Denise Haney

Posthumous Degree Recipient

Allyson Lee Harkey

Honoring of PhD Graduates

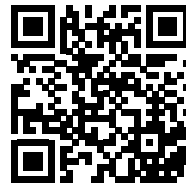
Honoring of Master of Social Work Candidates

Closing Remarks

Dean Judy Postmus

Recessional

Scan the QR code to view and download
a digital copy of this program or visit
ssw.umaryland.edu/convocation.



ACADEMIC COSTUME

The traditional caps and gowns worn in the academic procession have been the costume of scholars since medieval times. They probably were adapted from ecclesiastical garb, since many scholars in the Middle Ages were clerics. In 1895, an intercollegiate commission drafted a uniform code for academic costumes that the majority of colleges and universities in the United States have adopted.

Each of the three academic degrees has its own distinctive gown and hood. The gown representing the bachelor's degree has a long, pointed sleeve; the master's a narrow sleeve; and the doctor's a full, bell-shaped sleeve with three bars of velvet. The opening of this gown is faced with wide velvet bands, which may be black or of a color indicating the student's general field of learning.

The most colorful and distinctive part of the academic costume is the hood, which passes around the neck and extends down the back. The color of the velvet edging indicates the student's field of learning. The colors of the silk lining exposed in the center of the hood are those of the college or university that conferred the degree. The tassel may be either black or the color of the field of learning. The tassel of a doctor's cap may be gold.

WELCOME AND CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2026



Dean Judy Postmus

Dear Graduates,

Congratulations on successfully completing your academic journey with the University of Maryland School of Social Work. Your hard work, dedication, and commitment to promoting social justice and advancing the well-being of individuals and communities have paid off. Today's convocation marks a pivotal milestone in what I hope will be a long and fulfilling career in the profession of social work. As you know, the need for social workers is greater now than ever.

It's been an incredibly challenging year, but your perseverance prevailed. We need social workers like you in our schools advocating for children and families and at the highest levels of government setting policies. We need social workers in hospitals and communities to address the shortage of mental health providers, combat health disparities, and conduct life-changing research. Your drive and determination are needed to achieve our vision of a future in which social work research, practice, and policy come together to drive social justice and equity, strengthen communities, and improve lives locally, nationally, and globally. The time is now for social work — and the time is now for you.

As you continue your journey, I encourage you to stay connected with your classmates and professors. Maintain the relationships you have formed throughout your experience. Most importantly, as new alumni, stay connected to the School of Social Work. Our school will continue to be a resource for our students, alumni, and community through continuing professional education opportunities and other engaging events.

Best wishes to you in your future endeavors. May you lead with compassion, serve with purpose, and initiate change with boldness.

Congratulations to the Class of 2026!

Warm regards.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Judy Postmus'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Judy L. Postmus, PhD, ACSW

Dean and Professor, University of Maryland School of Social Work

2026 EXEMPLARY STUDENT, FACULTY, AND STAFF AWARD WINNERS

MSW Student of the Year

Jada Gross

Practicum Student of the Year

McKenzie Henson

Julee Kryder-Coe LPSC Award

Chloe Kastner

Amy Cohen-Callow LPSC Award

Tyler Brown

Geoffrey Greif Clinical Award

Tatiana Reyes

Rachaelle King

Child Welfare Fellowship Student of the Year Award

Autumn Brown

BHWISE Fellowship Award

Myshaurna Harrison

Outstanding MSW Educator of the Year

Samantha Fuld, DSW, MSW

Outstanding Student Success Partner of the Year

Erika Ford, LCSW-C, MSW

Donna Harrington PhD Mentor of the Year

Bethany Lee, PhD, MSW

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND RECOGNITION

Scan the QR code or visit ssw.umaryland.edu/convocation
to view a special video from University System of Maryland
Board of Regents chair Linda R. Gooden, MBA.



CONVOCATION STUDENT SPEAKER



DENISE HANEY

Denise Haney is a Master of Social Work (MSW) candidate at the University of Maryland School of Social Work (UMSSW), specializing in clinical practice with a focus on forensic social work. She currently serves as an intern with the Maryland Office of the Public Defender, where she provides client-centered support and develops mitigation narratives that advocate for justice-involved individuals.

Denise is a first-generation graduate and devoted single mother whose journey reflects resilience, faith, and unwavering determination. Beginning her undergraduate studies while raising her young son, working multiple jobs, and managing the demands of everyday life, she remained committed to building a better future for her family. Her lived experiences continue to shape her passion for advocacy and commitment to addressing systemic inequities, particularly within African American communities impacted by the criminal justice system.

Grounded in her faith and purpose, Denise approaches her work with compassion, strength, and a deep understanding of the populations she serves. She plans to earn her LMSW and continue her career in forensic social work, bridging the gap between clinical practice and the legal system while advocating for meaningful change.

Denise is honored to serve as the UMSSW 2026 Convocation Student Speaker, using her voice to inspire, uplift, and represent the resilience of those who overcome adversity to walk in purpose.

POSTHUMOUS DEGREE



ALLYSON LEE HARKEY

The University of Maryland School of Social Work confers a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree upon Allyson in recognition of her dedication, promise, and contributions to the field.

During her time in the MSW program, Allyson demonstrated exceptional curiosity, compassion, and purpose in her development as a social worker. She entered the program with a strong commitment to addressing intimate partner violence and its far reaching impacts on individuals, families, and communities — particularly women and the LGBTQ+ community. Building on her prior experience in health communications and public education, Allyson sought to move beyond systems level work to engage directly with survivors through trauma informed, ethical, and compassionate clinical practice.

As an advanced year MSW student, Allyson completed her practicum placement in a private practice setting, where she focused on developing her clinical skills and professional identity as a therapist. In supervision, she demonstrated deep curiosity about ethical decision making, client safety, and the nuances of trauma informed care. She engaged thoughtfully with feedback, asked incisive questions, and consistently worked to integrate theory into practice. Drawn to reflection, empathy, and humility, she was described by her supervisor as a brilliant and genuinely invested student whose commitment to showing up well for clients affirmed her promise as a future clinician.

Allyson also brought to her social work education a long standing commitment to equity, accountability, and community care. Through years of organizing and leadership in the arts, she learned the importance of listening across difference, sharing power, and building trust — lessons that deeply informed her emerging identity as a social worker.

In awarding her degree posthumously, we honor Allyson's creativity, empathy, and courage, and recognize the profound loss to the social work community of a healer who would have made an extraordinary impact.

PhD GRADUATES AND DISSERTATION TITLES

Yali Deng

“Minority Stress, Community Connectedness, and Suicidal Ideation: A Longitudinal Examination Among Three Generations of Sexual Minority Adults”

Tural Mammadli

“Patterns in Gender Marginalization Stress Experiences of Transgender and Nonbinary Persons of Color Living in the United States: Correlation with Health and Intimate Partner Outcomes”

Christel Joel Tajouh Daghuie

“The Silent Risk: Sociodemographic and Mental Health Correlates of Indeterminate Suicidality Status Among U.S. Adolescents”

Maura Tennor

“Mindfulness, Diabetes, and Pregnancy: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) of High-Risk Mothers from Baltimore”

Peiyuan Zhang

“Developing and Evaluating an Advance Care Planning Implementation Quality Assessment Tool: A Three-Paper Dissertation”

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK GRADUATES

Congratulations to the December 2025 and Spring and Summer 2026 MSW graduates.

Clinical Graduates

Remilekun Adeniyi	Angela Heajung Chang
Amanda Lee Ahmed	Victoria Gina Checa
Rachel Elizabeth Ahrens	Madison Chesser
Tiwalade Taiwo Ajayi	Diamando Chirgott
Bessie Allen	Bryan Citrenbaum
Rocelyn Stefany Alvarado	Kaitlin Clark
Valeria Alvarez-Belay	Anaisha Meshae Coates
Eve Renee Ammons	Daniel Conry
Arrion Anhwere, UCWF	Cassidy Mae Cooper, CWF
Rachel Afua Antwi Adjei, MPH	Yakiraah Nacal Corley
Dixia Michelle Arias	Christina Rebecca Cosio-Futch
Julia Del Carmen Aviles Zavala	Raina Annmarie Crew, LSPN
Maura Elvira Ayala-Cardenas, SUDWE	Claire Daigle
Sarah Ayer	Martha Amanda Darbre, LSPN
Heather Rebecca Bacon	Lashauye Davis
Marwah NurFitri Bahanan, SBMH	Tyra Michelle Davis
Mutiatu Balogun	Firemariam Sisay Debele
Morgan Barney	Elizabeth DeMarco, SUDWE
Beki Basch	William Dentzer, SUDIF
Florence Bastien	Essence Dickens
Carla Bergamini Cobra	Brittany Dinisio, CWF
Emily Berman	Claude Naomi Douckagha
Emma Blackburn, CWF	Shawna Kay Dougherty
Lauren Blakey, SUDWE	Tamika Dunston
Celia Boltansky	Ashley Marie Easton
Leah Isabell Boxman	Kendall Grace Ecker
Margaret Megan Matlock Boyle	Kaya-Nadine Desiree Edmondson-Deigh, MPP, UCWF
Michael Thomas Brennan, LSPN	Sam Henry Eig
Sophia Rose Brodinsky, ADVA	Maya Elder
Asha'nia Brown, UCWF	Shani Halla Zahara Elliott
Autumn Brown, CWF	Asha Bell Elmore, SBMH
Sarah Brown	Sam Enns
Nicole Jennifer Bryant	Hope Leigh Evans, CWF
Mallary T. Burch	Allia Farzand
Thomas Christopher Burkhart	Natalie Feit
Anne Marie Burns, SUDIF	Clara Cooper Ferrari, LSPN
VL Buzdygon, ADVA	Susan Marie Ferrell
Anna Byon, CWF	Kenzie Fox
David D. Carliner	Emily Elizabeth Fuentes, SBMH
Angel Carnecchia, SBMH	Zachary Gaither
Vanessa Carrasco, CWF	Tina Marie Garcia, SUDWE
David Allan Carton	Estefania Garcia Torres, SUDWE
Julia Caudill	Gabriella Gensheimer
April Chambers, SUDWE	Jules Gerstein

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK GRADUATES

Brianna Gilmer
Adalyn Glaser, ADVA
Lauren Elise Goldstein
Chanelle Goods, SUDWE
Jordan Grant, SBMH
Krishna Tyara Greene, SBMH
Noah Jonathan Grill
Cindy Gunraj
Nishtha Gupta
Victoria Hancock
Denise Leighann Haney
Bria M. Harding, UCWF
Grace Parker Harlan
Lindsey Nicole Harper, SBMH
Jasmine Harris, CWF
Myshaurna Harrison, SUDIF
Taylor Jeanette Harrison, UCWF
Ryan Haynes
Katelyn Healey
Sare Hendi
Letisha Michaela Henry
McKenzie Aleece Henson, CWF
Aaliyah Charisse Herbert, CWF
Martha Melissa Herrera, SBMH
Bradford Higgins
Brandon Hinton, SBMH
Stephanie Holden, LSPN
Tara Dawn Holley, SUDIF
Maya Quay Barrett Holliday
Janeal Homer
Yann-Erroll Egnonam Houndayi, SUDIF
Nichole Huff
Lauren Delaney Hughes
Oliver Hulser-Morris
Mickie Hundley, CWF
Lindsay Ibrahim
Shalom Iweha
Josephine Nakibuule Jackson
Fatimah Jaiteh, SUDIF
Haja Jalloh, SBMH
Amberlee Mae Jefferson
Latanya Necole Jefferson, SUDIF
Annabelle Leila Jenkins
Lorilee Jiron, MCCW
Stella Rose Johnson
Kahlia Chase Jones
Hannah Joyner, UCWF
George Kaludis
Vanessa Kalwa, CWF
Mohammed Ali Kamara
Sara Kayla Kanovsky
Kalen Karpoff
Caitlin Marie Kasmar
Mira Rae Kauffman-Rosengarten
Antoinette Kavades
Sana Simone Kayani, SBMH
Shannon Kearson, CWF
Kristin Nichole Kemp
Cecile Kim
Kay Kindy
Rachaelle Arakoshia King, MCST
Nicholas Joseph Klein, SUDWE
Elsa L. Knoll, SUDIF
Betty Nana Kromah
Melanie Kugler
Taiwo Lawson
Julia Grace Lee
Patricia Lee
Madison Elane Lester
Jordan Lewis, SBMH
Melodi Lewis, ADVA
Matthew Jun-Hong Lin
Matthew Richard Lipson, SUDWE
Erica Lashai Lockley, SBMH
Jessica Loi
Anthony Lopez, SUDWE
Megan Taylor Mahar
Ashley-Ann Elissia Malcolm
Kerri Marie Markham
Fatima Marquez Herrera, UCWF
Yarimar Mateo, LSPN
Evelyn Kay Matson
Marisa Mattucci
Crista Ariele Aguilar Mayo, SBMH
Kristopher Gerard McAlpine
Travis Mckenry, SUDIF
Caitlyn McNulty
HG Melia
Emily Elizabeth Mendoza Diaz, UCWF
Aliza Menick
Cidney Mikayla Metts
Greta Jane Michels

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK GRADUATES

Amirah Miller
Jasper Anastasius Mislak
Abigail Jazmin Moreno
Norman Christopher Moreno, SBMH
Claire Morgans
Catinca Morjan
Jaela Yvonne Morris
Kanisha Moss
Hamiyda Layla Muhammad
Marsha Moke Murphy
Margot Myers
Jacob Naquin
Elena May Nee
Nathan Nathaniel Newmuis, UCWF
Cindy Hanh Van Nguyen
Noah Bennett Offenbacher
Lauren Ojeda
Priscille Ollende
Adjoke Olympio, UCWF
Meldy Omare, CWF
Violet Horsfall Osai
Genevieve August Paliga
Madelyn Victoria Parisi
Adelaide Grace Parrott, SUDIF
Colleen Parsons
Jasmine Rebeca Pazmino
Ashley M. Pereira
Mya Perkins
Shelby Pinkett, SBMH
Jessica Ramirez Vasquez, MBA
Sivaleshwari Ramu
Brittany Lee Ratledge
Stephanie Elena Anne Rees
Wilshawnda Jamera Reese, SUDWE
Theo Reese Reinert
Jenna Reitenbach, UCWF
Tatiana Elisabete Reyes
Eduardo E. Reyes-Balbuena
Katia Saffron Rhodes
Anne Robbins
Henderson Rodriguez
Marciel Elaine Rojas Rosario, SUDWE
Sandra Kyan Roschli, LSPN
Ezra Rudman
Taylor-Rose Sadow
Wilhelmina Angwi Samba

Roxana Sanchez Guzman, LSPN
Lydia Sander
Sophia Schaaf
Stacey Elizabeth Schmidt
Theresa Schulte
Anna Schwartz
Emma Katherine Schwartz
Conqualla B. Scott, MPH
Laurie Seiler
Dasi Seralathan, CWF
David Serotte, LSPN
Olivia Xumatu Sesay, SBMH
Esther Shapiro
Maya Payne Sheppard
Simone Sherron, SUDWE
Nyasia Ayanna Shrader
Lilly Kate Sibel
Anjali Divya Singh
Lynn Emily Smigielski
Abigail Elizabeth Southers
Stephanie Sparks
Mariah Speert
Emma Brooke Stanley, CWF
Julia Elizabeth Stanley
Anna Claire Stein
Samuel Isaac Stettler
Alexis Alexandria Stevenson
Darius James Stewart
Nicholas Charles Stewart
Jill Studley
Carrie Sullivan
Emma Grace Sweeney
Eden Szilagyi
Ava Taylor
Candise Taylor
Jessica Grace Taylor
Nichelle Sieria Taylor, UCWF
Dorcas Omah Tayong, UCWF
Samantha Christine Teal
Andre L. Thomas
Yasmin Thorpe, CWF
Laura Tinkleman
Olivia Andin Tinong, SUDWE
Tsvetomila Tnova
Ronna Trent
Megan Reine Tudela, SUDWE

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK GRADUATES

Macie Unkle, CWF
Kayley Irlanda Velasquez
Samantha Villegas
Benjamin Charles Wallace
Shanika D. Walters, LSPN
Sarah Catherine Wang
Gina Watkins, SBMH
Latonya Danielle Webster, SUDIF
Paige Weidemeyer
Leah Williams
Melissa Denise Williams, LSPN
Sara Anne Williams

Terrena Javaina Williams
Alexis Wolf, UCWF
Cora Lilly Wolford
Remika Wright
April Xu
Dana Margot Yablon
Madeline Hannah Zapor
Rebecca Zemel, SBMH
Mariana Zimmermann
Laura Zynda

Leadership, Policy, and Social Change Graduates

Madeleine Amelia Bennett
Katibeth Blalock, MPH
Tyler Brown
Emma Katherine Charles
Lylan Everett
Jada Gross
Jessica Haviland
Stefani Johnson
Uday Sharad Joshi
Chloe Jay Kastner
Samantha Jade Kennedy
Rachael Keyes
Mckenzie Kittrell
Kari Lynn Litterer

Lauren Nickerson
Thomas Northrup
Nora Perez
Clara Pfefferkorn
Zara Eleanor Pollack
Kaleigh Powell
Ashley Ramos
Daniel Emerson Rascovar
Caroline Sprow
Mars Perkasa Tamara
Selah Sandra-Marie Thom
B. Trewin
Susan Eleanor Wallendorf
Demia Wiyahnyuy

KEY

Dual Degrees

- MPP:** Master of Public Policy, University of Maryland, College Park
MBA: Master of Business Administration, University of Maryland, College Park
MPH: Master of Public Health, University of Maryland School of Medicine or Johns Hopkins University
MCST: Medical Cannabis Science and Therapeutics Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Program, University of Maryland School of Pharmacy

Fellowships

- ADVA:** ADVANCE/AVANCE Interprofessional Fellowship
CWF: Child Welfare Fellowship
LSPN: Behavioral Health Workforce Integration, Service and Education—Lifespan
MCCW: Montgomery County Child Welfare Fellowship
SBMH: School Based Mental Health Fellowship
SUDIF: Substance Use Disorders Interventions Fellowship
SUDWE: Substance Use Disorder Workforce Enhancement Fellowship
UCWF: Urban Child Welfare Fellowship

WAYS TO STAY CONNECTED



Connie Sgarlata

Congratulations, Class of 2026!

As you graduate, we are excited to welcome you into our alumni community! Your connection to the University of Maryland School of Social Work continues beyond commencement, and we hope you will stay engaged in the years ahead.

The Alumni Relations and Development team looks forward to supporting you through networking, events, and professional opportunities. You can stay connected by:

- Keeping your contact information up to date
- Following and engaging with us on social media
- Participating in alumni events and programs
- Sharing your career updates and accomplishments

We hope you will continue to see the school as a professional home and a lifelong resource. Congratulations again, we look forward to staying in touch. Visit ssw.umaryland.edu/alumni to access alumni engagement activities.

Warm regards,

Connie Sgarlata, MSW '89

Alumna and Associate Director

Office of Alumni Relations and Development

2025-2026 UMSSW ALUMNI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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