

EXCELSIOR COLLEGE COMMENCEMENT

July 8, 2022
Albany, New York



COMMENCEMENT

CELEBRATING THE CLASS OF 2022, JOINED BY
MEMBERS OF THE CLASS OF 2021 AND CLASS OF 2020

WELCOME

PROCESSIONAL

“Pomp and Circumstance”

Mace Bearer

Christopher Cassirer
Interim Provost and Chief Academic Officer

Gonfalonier

Scott Dolan
Dean, School of Graduate Studies

OPENING OF COMMENCEMENT

Don Dea
Chair, Excelsior College Board of Trustees

MUSICAL RENDITION

“The Star-Spangled Banner”

Daniel Pascoe Aguilar
Founding Director, Center for Social Justice
Chief Diversity Officer

PRESIDENT’S ADDRESS

David Schejbal

GRADUATE ADDRESS

Anthony Scott Craney Fortenberry
Master of Science, 2021; Bachelor of Science, 2021

AWARDING OF HONORARY DEGREE

Don Dea

Presenting to:

Larry Purnell

Emeritus Professor, School of Nursing, College of Health Sciences,
University of Delaware, and Emeritus Professor, Excelsior College
Doctor of Humane Letters (Honoris Causa)

Presented by:

Helen Benjamin and Jeanne Meister

AWARDING OF DEGREES

PRESENTATION OF DEGREE CANDIDATES

Christopher Cassirer
Interim Provost and Chief Academic Officer

CONFERRING OF DEGREES

Don Dea
Chair, Excelsior College Board of Trustees

AWARDING OF DEGREES

Don Dea, David Schejbal, Christopher Cassirer, and Academic Deans

CONCLUSION

CLOSING REMARKS

Don Dea

RECESSIONAL

“Pomp and Circumstance”

The flags on the stage are symbols of the many nations represented by this year's graduates. Flags include:

Australia	Germany	Russia
Bahamas	Gibraltar	Sri Lanka
Brazil	Israel	Sweden
Canada	Italy	United Kingdom
China	Japan	United States
Costa Rica	South Korea	

We request that guests remain seated until the conclusion of the recessional.

HONORARY DEGREE

DOCTOR OF HUMANE LETTERS (HONORIS CAUSA)

LARRY PURNELL

Larry Purnell is emeritus professor, School Nursing, College of Health Sciences, at the University of Delaware, and emeritus professor at Excelsior College. Throughout his career, he has demonstrated extraordinary and sustained contributions to nursing theory through development, scholarship, teaching, and service to the global community. He is passionate about his belief that culturally competent care can serve as a means of eliminating health disparities on a worldwide basis.



The impact of Purnell's work is truly global. His model, the Purnell Model for Cultural Competence, has been translated into Arabic, Czech, Flemish, Korean, French, German, Japanese, Persian, Portuguese, Spanish, and Turkish. His textbook, "Transcultural Health Care: A Culturally Competent Approach" won the Brandon Hill and American Journal of Nursing Book Awards. He has more than 100 refereed journal publications, 100 book chapters, and 14 textbooks, including updated editions. He has made presentations throughout the United States as well as in Australia, Colombia, Costa Rica, England, Italy, Korea, Panama, Russia, Scotland, Spain, and Turkey. He is the U.S. representative to the European Union's Commission on Intercultural Communication that resulted from the Salamanca, Sorbonne, Bologna, and WHO Declarations.

A fellow in the American Academy of Nursing, Purnell is also a Transcultural Nursing Scholar, Luther Christman Fellow, and featured on the Rosa Parks Wall of Fame for Teaching Tolerance.

Purnell's affiliation with Excelsior College began in 1980, when he became an item writer for the nursing theory examinations offered by the Regents External Degree Program. He then joined the nursing governance faculty and taught online courses in the bachelor's and master's programs until 2021. Purnell serves on the School of Nursing Curriculum Committee and assists faculty and nursing leadership in delivering a contemporary education for our future nurse leaders.

Purnell earned a PhD in Health Services Administration with a major in Nursing Service Administration from Columbia Pacific University, Master of Science in Nursing from Rush University, Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Kent State University, and an Associate Degree in Nursing from Cuyahoga Community College.

GRADUATES IN ATTENDANCE

SCHOOL OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES

Associate

Titilayo Adepoju
Maria Arizmendi
Rita Ashton
*** Rachel Atkinson
Brandon Brinson
Amanda Burgett
*** Karine Camacho
Gary Campbell
Nicole Catanuto
Shana Ceballo
Teraishia Christian
Sentaria Depassmurray
Shainey Dumas
** Marzette Echols
* David Egan
Bryan Galvan
* Berta Garcia
* Cesar Guerra
Gail Harris
Miranda Head
Leonila Lotoc
Kevin Mansur
Marcetta Martin-Richardson
Antonio Mateo
Michelle McGill
Kayla McKay
Jeanine Narcisse
*** Ilandra O'Doherty
Charese Pace

Dana Pitts
Mark Pratt
Milagro Rivera
Danielle Royce
Jose Silva
Andrew Stewart
Jamal Thompson
Nikki Tucker
Najah Vasquez
Gustavo Villasenor
Tonya Wooten
Taja Young

Bachelor's

Gregory Adams
Marques Alexander
Essi Amegee
Kelly Arampath Roach
Nicole Arzumanova
Manuel Atiencia
Wfaa Awad
Albert Ball
Alishba Balsara
Matthew Bassham
Crystal Batterson
• Cesar Ryan Bendita
Hilda Bermudez
Chasmine Bias
John Bilos
• Anna Bishop
Tommy Blanchard
Shterna Bluming
Heather Bodine

Associate Degree Honors:

- * Honors (3.5–3.74)
- ** High Honors (3.75–3.89)
- *** Highest Honors (3.9–4.0)

Bachelor's Degree Honors:

- Cum Laude (3.5–3.74)
- Magna Cum Laude (3.75–3.89)
- Summa Cum Laude (3.9–4.0)

This list includes graduates registered as of June 21, 2022.

GRADUATES IN ATTENDANCE

- Rose Bonilla
- Viola Boone
- Correy Borrelli
- Harold Brickel
- Keaton Briscoe
- Tiffany Brown
- Marco Brown
- Candida Bryant
- Alterick Buchanan
- Edward Buckhanon
- Robert Burns
- Djuana Caldwell
- Yuri Camesi
- Jeffery Campbell
- John Campbell
- Nicholas Campbell
- Lorena Castillo
- Ramiro Castillo
- Joseph Cate
- Daniel Caudell Jr.
- Annette Chalmers
- Trent Chandler
- Darrell Charette
- Michael Cheffetz
- Jetho Clerveaux Sr.
- Frederick Cole
- Michael Colton
- Michael Consuegra
- Jodi Cookson
- Leo Coombs
- Jonathan Cope
- William Cornette
- William Correa
- Jeremiah Cox
- Hayley Crandall
- Ernesto Cruz
- Iann Cummings
- Nichole Danley
- Michael De Franco
- Jordyn Deems
- Doris DeJesus Ochoa
- Lisa Delacruz
- Robert DeSouter
- Angela Divinity
- David Dorsey
- Chelsea Dowling
- Janice Duffy
- Amanda Eckstein
- Dnard Edwards
- Kenneth Evangelista
- Samuel Eygnor
- William Fearington
- Elisabet Feliciano
- Barry Finkel
- Chanelle Ford
- Kathleen Fralish
- Oscar Franco
- Nicole Fredette
- Melanie Fulkerson
- Orlando Galarza
- Annabelle Gallup
- Gregory Gardner
- Debra Garrett
- Tonesha Garrett
- Benjamin Gendel
- Yair Gersten
- Austin Giddings
- Stephan Godakandage
- Dorothy Goldson
- Rica Helen Stephanie Jean Gomez
- Kristina Gonzales
- Julio Gonzalez
- Maricela Gonzalez
- Nakeyia Grant
- Brandy Griffin
- Meghan Gumnitz
- David Hacker
- Donald Ham

GRADUATES IN ATTENDANCE

- Sherry-Anne Harewood
- David Harry
- Brent Hayes
- Sonia Hernandez
- John Hill
- Latonya Hill
- Michael Hill
- Malki Hindurangalage Don
- Jessica Hish
- Leslie Holder
- Carmen Holman
- Bobby Holness
- Kortney Hornberger
- Johnson Huang
- Ashley Hutson
- Ramone Jefferson
- Kazzene Johnson
- Alicia Jones
- William Keefer
- Rolanda Kirby
- William Klee
- Brittany Koch
- Christopher Korpics
- Dayna Lamothe
- Jann Rezzi Le
- James Lew
- Kevin Loiselle
- Quentin Lott
- Milena Magee
- Britney Martinez
- Ewart McFarlane
- Whitney McLean
- Bonita Meredith
- Michael Metcalf
- Delanie Miles
- Jervaughn Miller
- Hector Mitaynes
- Felicia Mitchell
- Arlisa Moffatt-Scales
- Sujani Mohanakumar
- Vanidie Montgomery
- Jennifer Morad
- Andy Morley
- Ronald Morton
- Anthony Moss
- Matt Muhowski
- Martez Murielgriffin
- Christopher Murphy
- Raenell Murray
- Robert Navarro
- Rico Nelson
- Tshana Nelson
- Tiffani Neubel-Johnson
- Marc Newbern
- Hilton Newton
- David Nguyen
- Dodji Nouledo
- Michael Oakes
- Kayla Obst
- Elien Olmos
- Temitayo Oloniyo
- Esther Opong
- Christine Ostrander
- Mahamadi Ouedraogo
- Johnluis Padua
- Jason Page
- Jennifer Painter
- Austin Parker
- Shawnelle Parker
- Kurt Parks
- Juan Patino
- Otalie Paul
- Joseline Paulino
- Heather Peabody
- Denise Peele
- Terrence Peele

GRADUATES IN ATTENDANCE

- Manuel Perez
- Karina Pham
- Patthama Phuektong
- Thang Poe
- Catherine Ponce
- Ishata Pratt
- Vena Ramirez
- Octavio Ramos
- Roberto Rangel
- Shannel Reed
- Donald Renfro
- Dawn Riley
- Lystra Riley
- Chantale Rios
- Jennifer Rivard
- Jazleine Rivas
- Juan Rivera
- Tracy Robbins
- Janet Robinson
- Cynthia Rooks
- Mark Rumler
- Alessandro Salsi
- Gerard Salvia
- Andrew Samuelson
- Megan Sanzo
- Daniel Scrobe III
- Curtis Shank
- Omaid Sharifi
- Karen Showalter
- Victor Sifunjo
- Shalana Smith
- Andrew Staehle
- Juan Staggers
- Daniel Stanley
- Christa Stauder
- Joshua Steinlicht
- Amber Sutherland-Dunkins
- Ahamed Tao
- Ryan Tariq
- Carel Tate
- John Taylor
- Nikesha Taylor
- Bonna Teriele
- Aragaw Tessema
- Trinae Thompson
- Roberto Valdez III
- Yesenia Valencia
- Creola Wade
- Russell Wagner
- Tammy Walker
- Natalie Walton
- William Ward
- Mark Warren
- Maya Warren
- Alysia Watkins
- Aeysha Watson
- Webton Webley
- Ernesto Weisburg
- John Welcome
- Cody Wells
- Terrica West
- Jarmine Westmoreland
- Brian Westover
- Clarisa Willey
- Gregory Williams
- Jonathan Wittrock
- Fareeha Ziyen

GRADUATES IN ATTENDANCE

SCHOOL OF NURSING

Associate

Leslie Acevedo
Alaba Adewumi
Danitza Aguilar
Georgette Alamo
Dannie Alexandre
Sena Amegbletor
Setty Asiyo
Mary Bates
Mafouna Belly Laurent
Rena Benton
Mary Blaylock
Christine Bossert
Dominika Brooks
Jamie Burnham
Vannessa Butler-Carter
Lori Calvin
Jasmine Cantres
Patricia Carney
Brittney Carpenter
Erika Clark
Kimberlee Collazo
Colleen Conklin
Aileen Cotrone
Adrien Covington
Erica Croniser
Marshina Curry
April Davis
Sheila Davis
Cindy-Lou Demmin-Denny
Erin Diaz Oatman
Susan Dlugunovych
Leosmary Domenech
Karen Dunlap
Therese Duvil
Laura Elbakry

Marlee Faircloth
Nooria Ferrell
Levelte Figaro
Wendi Foley
Berline Francois
Shawan Freeman
Leonore Garcia
Danielle Genereux
Samwel Gitonga
Tiffany Good
Latyra Graham
Athena Greene
Melissa Griffin
Erica Hellmann
Sandra Henry
Simone Henry
Melissa Heusdens
Michael Hope
Keisha Huie
Kurtis Jackson
Christy James
Daphney Jean
Atasha Jenkins
Kelly Johns
Keisha Johnson
Myrtelle Juste
Harwant Kamboj
Stephanie Kinloch
Hannah Kinyanjui
Olajumoke Laseinde
Brenda Laume
Ashley Lawrence
Renee Lee-Kirby
Aurielle Lewis
Micah Lewis
Danielle Ligenza
Gladys Lopez
Genta Louis
Antrisha Lugo

GRADUATES IN ATTENDANCE

Jeannine Lusanga
Jane Mabusi
Lillian Machuki
Holly Maribito
Cassandra Martuscelli
Jacqueline Maynard
Dimonica McClain
Felicia McKoy
Daisy Mercado-Mendez
Cheryllisa Mgbeme
Darcie Miclette
Sabrina Mohabir
Alexandra Moya
Samantha Murray
Margaret Musoke
Sascha Nazario
Irielle Nettles
Geoffrey Norton
Miriam Nwankwo
Chipo Nyamunda
Genevieve Obi-Osuala
Kyle Owens
Rebecca Panetta-Castellino
Roslyn Penaranda
Tina Perez
Chantera Perry
Jacqueline Peterkin-Williams
Kathleen Pike
Durania Pujols
Kimberly Quetant
Marisol Razo
Michele Redman
Rachel Reeves
Jessica Reich
Sheraine Reid-Walters
Marie Remy
Ashley Reynolds
Barbi Richards
Kim Richards-O'Connor
Diana Rios
Oliver Rosario
Debbie Rose
Glenda Ruff
Maria Sanchez
Marica Sanders
Natasha Sandyford
Theresa Santalucia
Jamie Sawyer
Latanya Scott-Cade
Karen Seager
William Sharpe
Melanie Shaw
Tiffany Sigler
Blossom Simpson
Salonika Singh
Jasmine Small
Tamara Smith
Lisa Solimando
Tina Sutton
Margaret Swab
Kathy Swader
Trudie Tapper
Edna Tarble
Lolita Taylor
Joyce Thomas
Mable Tobias
Anne Treadwell
Marcia Valese
Stephanie Veloz
Florence Wanganga
Christine Williams
Geraldine Williams
Vivian Williams
Regina Williamson-Genwright
Yanique Wright
Jennifer Youngs

GRADUATES IN ATTENDANCE

Bachelor's

- Wendy Bobb Inniss
Shirley Brown
Tanisha Butler
Tatyana Chereshnov
Douglas Coons
Gyanu Darai
- Catherine Mitchell
France Mulkey-Fennety
 - Penny Nikitas
Vesna Nikolic
Angela Oates
Tyjuan Pickens
Doris Preslar Leveque
 - Rosalba Ramos
Yvette Savaria
Bethany Sentz
 - Julie Stoffels
Nicole Timpanelli
Valerie Williams
Heather Wolfe
Tutsirai Zemura

Master's

- Sadie Allen
Vicky Bracken
Bernard Browner
Leith Carkner
Jessica Cheverie
Felicia Connell
Jessica Dunn
Anthony Fortenberry

- June Glebus
Jeremy Heisey
Sarah Lafond-Nicholls
Christina Miller
Jennifer Miller
Cathy Mosiello
Sharda Neu
Patricia Norris
Kristen Parillo
Brenda Parker
Becki Pickering
Rebecca Ricchiuti
Tamika Richardson
Rose Rubin
Joan-Anne Simpkins
Braxton Tomsic
Kathleen Whitford

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

- Wilfrido Abreu
Joseph Ajiboye
Olayinka Akinyemi
Josayne Anderson Tejera
Udara Arampath
Faustine Asuncion
Ghulsoom Awan
Kimberly Baker
Matthew Baumgartner
W. James Bethea
Jazzmin Bethel
Glosther Bienaime

Associate Degree Honors:

- * Honors (3.5–3.74)
- ** High Honors (3.75–3.89)
- *** Highest Honors (3.9–4.0)

Bachelor's Degree Honors:

- Cum Laude (3.5–3.74)
- Magna Cum Laude (3.75–3.89)
- Summa Cum Laude (3.9–4.0)

GRADUATES IN ATTENDANCE

Jill Broderick
Mark Brodzinski
Kerry Ann Brooks
Rashawn Brown
Teekia Cain
Michelle Calhoun
Greg Carman
Lavar Carmon
Duran Carpenter
Shaun Cespedes
Kanika Clarke
Maaisa Cleaves
Amanda Colby
Marvin Cole
Danielle Conway
Carolyn Cook
Robert Cullen
Kayla Culver
William Davenport Jr.
Gislaine Delgado
Lakeisha Deloach
Samir Dembry
Alexandra Diaz
Wayne Dorr
Nathan Ellsworth
Steven Escobar
Herman Estrada
Quanisha Evans
Barbara Fahey
Adalgisa Fernandez
Pamela Finnerty
Daniel Fonyam
Abigael Fonyam
Zykeedric Free
Chad Geers
Thomas Gonzales
Melvin Gray
William Green
Gregory Green

Leroy Greene
David Grissom
Sarah Gu
Anita Gurule
Brandon Harbin
Felicia Harrison
Chantel Hattaway
Cefferycol Hines
Colleen Hitt
Jamia Hocog
John Hwang
Rose Jacques
Victoria Johansen
Juan Johnson
Jeneil Johnson Brown
Derek Jones
Vaughnyetta Jones
Larry Jordan-Wheeler
Elvira Karanaeva
Jessica Kelly
Caitlin Kempf
Phillip Klohr
Thandekile Koniszewski
Mathew Kotch
Jose Kovacs
Carol Lalgee
Tamara Latko
Timothy Leaks
Althea Mahon-Lewis
Steven Marciano
Courtney Martin
Paula Martinez
David Martinsen
Brian Mathieu
Marty Maust
Terrence McAllister
Lisa McCauley
Mary McGrail
Jennifer McMinn

GRADUATES IN ATTENDANCE

Elizabeth Menzies
Christina Mergendahl
Raun Merritt
Nicole Mirande
Oscar Montesdeoca
Ronald Moreland
Matthew Mossholder
Jorge Munoz
Dean Musgrove
Alan NeJame
Andy Nguyen
Edna Nieves
Lilly Njoku
Santwan Odom
Jacqueline O'Keefe
January Phillips
Mickee Pomeisl
Eileen Portorsnok
Daniel Price
Pamela Quarterman
Johnny Quezada
Atika Rianom
Maricel Rikert
Anna Rivera
Hussien Rizk
Tina Roberts
Vanessa Robinson
Reinaldo Rodriguez
Dennis Roper Jr.
Luis Salas Hernandez
Shawn Sampson
Stefanie Schappert
Jason Senecal
Willie Short
Linda Simmons-Green
Deepak Singh
Christian Smith Jr.
Shawna Smith
Natalie Spence

Patrick Strong
Denise Sullivan
Lisa Swartwood
Cleveland Sweat
Keisha Thompson
Mincarlo Thompson
Samantha Thompson
Lauren Thornhill
Lakisha Tribble
Stephanie Trivino
Edna Turner
Caryl Turner-Slay
Chanell Underwood
Roy Vanterpool
Scott Waller
Leigh Ward
Susan Wheeler
Monique White
Jessica Whiting
Richard Williams
Derek Willis
Alphia Wilson
Tami Workman
Patricia Wrobel

EMBLEMS AND SYMBOLS

Mace and Chain

The mace and the presidential chain-of-office used in academic celebrations represent traditions dating to the 16th century. The mace, originally used as a medieval weapon, now symbolizes the authority of the university to grant degrees. The sterling silver torch of the Excelsior College mace reflects the College's logo. The mace carries designs that depict the degree programs Excelsior College offers. The Scottish thistle represents thrift, the acorn represents new ideas which will grow into great oaks, and the bee represents industry.

The chain-of-office similarly originated in a culture of centuries ago and has been used traditionally in ceremonies to symbolize the office of the wearer. Matching the mace in theme, the chain-of-office of the president of Excelsior College features the same symbolic craftsmanship and the College's logo. The medallion bears the College's name.

The artist for both the mace and chain-of-office was Kurt J. Matzdorf, professor emeritus of gold and silversmithing in the art department at the State University of New York-College at New Paltz.

Academic Dress

The academic costume is derived from the garments worn at medieval universities. The gowns and the hoods were common at British universities before the 14th century; the square cap is thought to be a 16th-century import from the University of Paris. From the color and the size of the American academic attire, one may determine the institution from which the wearer received the degree, the degree earned, and the academic rank.

The associate and bachelor's gowns are black, knee length, and have long sleeves; the master's gown is also black, and made with a long, closed sleeve with an arc of a circle appearing near the bottom, and

a slit for the arm; the doctor's gown has a full, round, open sleeve and is faced with velvet and has three bars of velvet on each sleeve. The velvet trim may be black or the color representative of the degree. The black Oxford or mortarboard-style cap is worn for all degrees, but only the doctor's cap may be made of velvet and only doctors or presidents of institutions may wear a gold tassel on the cap.

The most distinctive feature of academic dress is the hood. It varies in length depending on whether the wearer has an associate, bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree. The hoods for all degrees are lined in silk with the academic colors of the institution conferring the degree. The trim on all hoods except the associate degree hood is velvet and the color indicates the degree granted: white for arts and letters; drab for business areas; yellow-gold for science; apricot for nursing; and peacock blue for public administration.

At Excelsior College, gold honor cords are worn by baccalaureate-level graduates with GPAs of 3.5 or above having earned at least 60 graded credits and by associate-level graduates with GPAs of 3.5 or above having earned at least 30 graded credits.

Key to Academic Cords

Gold: Academic Honors

Red, White & Blue: Military Affiliation

Purple: Excelsior College Alumni

Association, Contributing Member

Light Purple & White: Honor Society of

Nursing, Tau Kappa At-Large Chapter

Burgundy & Gold: Alpha Sigma

Lambda National Honor Society,

Sigma Zeta Chapter

Red & Gold: Alpha Nu Sigma

Green & Gold: Sigma Beta Delta

Maroon & White: Upsilon Pi Epsilon

Graduates are wearing GreenWeaver gowns made in the USA from 100 percent post-consumer plastic bottles.

GRADUATE AWARDS

Michael J. Cooley Memorial Award

This award is presented to a health sciences graduate in memory and recognition of the contributions of Michael J. Cooley, a beloved and dedicated adjunct health sciences faculty member. The recipient of the award earned a health sciences degree and embodies exemplary academic achievement and exceptional perseverance. This graduate accepts the challenges that befall an adult learner and embraces the opportunity to grow academically, professionally, and personally within the health sciences discipline.

JERVAUGHN MILLER

Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences

Catherine Craig-Erhardt Memorial Award

This award is given in memory of Catherine Craig-Erhardt, a member of the College staff beginning in 1980. From 1984 until her untimely death in 1986, she served as the College's liaison to the military. The award recognizes and commemorates her commitment to helping military servicemembers attain their educational goals and is presented for service to others, commitment to education, and for academic, professional, and personal achievement.

RAUN MERRITT

Master of Science in Cybersecurity

Marvin Curling Memorial Award

This award is given in memory and recognition of the vision and contribution of Marvin Curling to the development of collaboration between industry and education through the integration of corporate-sponsored training and college-level learning. A New York Power Authority training superintendent, Curling motivated employees at NYPA to persist in educational advancement and helped establish degrees in technology at Excelsior (then Regents) College. In honor of the superior model of collaboration that he helped establish, the New York Power Authority contributed the endowment to maintain this annual award which is presented to a graduate who achieved outstanding academic achievement while pursuing a degree in a technology program.

BRYAN GALVAN

*Associate of Applied Science in
Technical Studies*

Arthur J. Gregg Award

This award recognizes the leadership and vision of founding trustee Lt. General Arthur J. Gregg [U.S. Army (Ret.)]. General Gregg chaired the College's Board of Overseers and guided the transition to independence as a private institution, becoming the first chair of the Board of Trustees. With a distinguished career in the U.S. Army, General Gregg has contributed greatly to the College's service to the U.S. military. The award is presented to a graduate who is on active duty in the U.S. military and who demonstrates outstanding academic and career or professional achievement.

ALEXANDRA CARLTON MAHANNA

Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice

GRADUATE AWARDS

Dwayn Hanford Award

This award is presented in recognition of Excelsior College alumnus Dwayn Hanford. As past president of the Excelsior College Alumni Association and Alumni Leadership Council, a C. Wayne Williams Award recipient, and adjunct instructor, Hanford is a strong advocate and ally of the College and the mission to educate 21st-century public sector leaders and citizens. The recipient of the Dwayn Hanford Award has completed a public service degree with academic excellence and significant community involvement.

ROBERT M. DESOUTER

*Bachelor of Science in
Military Leadership*

Robert E. Kinsinger Memorial Award

This award recognizes the leadership and vision of founding trustee Dr. Robert E. Kinsinger. As the first chair of the College's Board of Overseers, Dr. Kinsinger built upon his earlier relationship to the College as a vice president of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. While at the foundation, Dr. Kinsinger encouraged and supported the development of the Regents College nursing degree programs, an interest that he carried forward into his work as an overseer and later as a Trustee. Eligible graduates must have completed a master's degree through Excelsior in either the School of Graduate Studies or the School of Nursing. The graduate must have volunteer and/or career experience in a nonprofit organization.

JOHNNY QUEZADA

Master of Science in Management

Charles W. Laffin Jr. Memorial Award

This award is in recognition of Charles W. Laffin whose vision and leadership gave momentum to a fledgling Community College movement and left a legacy of opportunity to millions of adult learners. In gratitude for his invaluable service to Excelsior College, the faculty of the College presents this award for academic excellence and outstanding achievement. To be eligible for the Charles W. Laffin Jr. Memorial Award, the graduate must have earned credit from a community college before attending Excelsior College. The graduate must have received a master's degree from Excelsior College (non-Nursing).

OSCAR J. MONTEDEOCA

Master of Science in Criminal Justice

Learning in Practice Award

This award is presented to a graduate who has excelled in their coursework and utilized what they have learned outside of the classroom in an experiential manner, such as through research, presentations, project implementation, or publications.

LYNDA SALAS

*Bachelor of Science in Business/
Master of Business Administration*

GRADUATE AWARDS

Dr. Robert L. Long Award for Academic Excellence in Nuclear Engineering Technology

This award was created in recognition of Dr. Robert L. Long's service and contribution to Excelsior College. He was regarded as an expert in nuclear education and a proponent of the link between training and education and the safe operation of nuclear facilities. Students selected for this award must work in the nuclear power industry and be a member of the American Nuclear Society.

PHILLIP KLOHR

*Bachelor of Science in Nuclear
Engineering Technology*

Robert P. Mahoney Award

In recognition of Dr. Robert P. Mahoney's outstanding contributions to liberal arts education at this College and his devotion to serving his community, this award is presented to a liberal arts graduate who completed his/her degree in the face of significant challenges and demonstrated a dedication to community and volunteer service.

KRISTIN CEBULSKI

Bachelor of Science in Liberal Arts

Ruth V. Matheney Memorial Award

This award is given in memory and recognition of the distinguished contributions of Ruth V. Matheney to nursing and nursing education, her nationally acclaimed leadership toward progressive, patient-centered practices in the classroom and at the bedside, and of her wise and willing counsel to the Excelsior College nursing programs. The recipient of this award has completed an undergraduate degree in nursing at Excelsior College and has demonstrated outstanding academic achievement.

PENNY NIKITAS

Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Mildred L. Montag Memorial Award

This award is given in recognition of Dr. Mildred L. Montag's national leadership in nursing and nursing education and her distinguished contribution to the development of the nursing programs offered by Excelsior College. The graduate selected to receive this award has completed the Excelsior College Master of Science in Nursing program and has demonstrated outstanding academic achievement and excellence in all the nursing courses, including the capstone course.

CATHY A. MOSIELLO

*Master of Science in Nursing
Leadership and Administration of
Health Care Systems*

GRADUATE AWARDS

Outstanding Interdisciplinary Leadership Award

This award recognizes excellence in interdisciplinary leadership and is awarded to a graduate student whose work in the classroom, workplace, or community has transcended disciplinary boundaries through high-impact interdisciplinary collaborations leading to change. The recipient of Outstanding Interdisciplinary Leadership Award has demonstrated leadership qualities and incorporated diverse perspectives to promote ethical, inclusive, and sustainable change.

MICHAEL A. PRESTON

Master of Science in Health Sciences

Jean M. Smith Award

This award recognizes the leadership and vision of founding trustee Jean Smith. Smith's career in banking has been characterized by a deep commitment to institutions that are devoted to improving society. Her passion for social justice informed her work with the College, first as an overseer and later as a trustee, as she worked to support its students. The award is presented to a graduate who has demonstrated outstanding academic and professional achievement in the world of business.

RHONDA HESTER-SCOTT

Associate in Applied Science in Administrative/Management Studies

Joshua L. Smith Award

This award recognizes the leadership and vision of founding trustee Joshua L. Smith. During his three years as chair of the Excelsior College Board of Trustees, he encouraged the College to expand graduate degree programs. Smith, a retired professor and director of the Program in Higher Education and Center for Urban Community College Leadership, New York University, School of Education, dedicated his career to education. This award recognizes the sacrifices graduate students have made to serve others while balancing their own academic studies. The recipient of this award has persevered in their education while also volunteering in an organization such as the military, a medical agency, nonprofit group, or place of worship.

MARK MAINU

Master of Business Administration

Student Support Award

This award is presented to a person (or persons) whose assistance played a significant role in helping a graduate earn an Excelsior College degree.

WILLIE ROBERT MARKS

nominated by

JESSICA LANHAM

Associate in Science in Nursing

GRADUATE AWARD RECIPIENTS

Jervaughn Miller

MICHAEL J. COOLEY MEMORIAL AWARD

Jervaughn Miller, of Orlando, Florida, earned a Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences in July 2021, magna cum laude with a 3.84 GPA. Miller is a U.S. Army officer candidate.

Miller completed his degree while working full-time, interning, and completing his Navy Reserve duties, all while maintaining a high GPA. To reach the finish line and make his dream come true, he took summer classes, worked long shifts, and spent many nights studying late.

Miller worked at the Walmart Specialty Pharmacy as a community health worker, where he helped HIV+ patients gain better access to health care and health outcomes. He interned at the Southwest Florida Water Management District as a field service technician where he was responsible for the collection of ground and surface water quality samples, thereby learning about the environmental aspects of public health. He also worked as a manager for a COVID-19 vaccination and testing site during the height of the pandemic.

In addition to his bachelor's degree from Excelsior, Miller earned an Associate of Science in Health Sciences from Excelsior in 2019.

Raun Merritt

CATHERINE CRAIG-ERHARDT MEMORIAL AWARD

Raun Merritt, of Laurel, Maryland, earned a Master of Science in Cybersecurity in July 2021, with a 4.0 GPA. Merritt is the assistant director of operations for the Deployed Communications and Information Systems Control Center.

Throughout his career, Merritt has mentored more than 200 military, civilian, and contractor personnel. He has been a cyber ambassador for Air Force cadets, hosted professional development seminars for junior officers, mentored young officers, and has also authored and published a book teaching financial literacy. He is also a strong supporter of diversity and inclusion efforts; in 2018, he assisted an outreach program encouraging youth to pursue aerospace and STEM careers.

Merritt is a life member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc., and is the recipient of many awards and decorations, including Joint Service Commendation Medal with one oak leaf cluster, Air and Space Commendation Medal, Air and Space Outstanding Unit Award with one oak leaf cluster, Air and Space Recognition Ribbon (Air Force-level award winner), National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, and Korean Defense Service Medal.

GRADUATE AWARD RECIPIENTS

Bryan Galvan

MARVIN CURLING MEMORIAL AWARD

Bryan Galvan, of Ballston Spa, New York, earned an Associate of Applied Science in Technical Studies in March 2022, with a 4.0 GPA. Galvan is a fire controlman, first class, with the U.S. Navy.

Galvan says the road to earning his degree was difficult. He says, “From the start of my tenure here at Excelsior in May 2020 to now, I’ve gone on a deployment, had my third child, bought a home while organizing a whole family move from another country, faced the challenges of living in a new city, all while trying to squeeze in as many assignments as I could in my free time.”

Despite the hardships, Galvan persevered and earned As in all his courses. With his military accomplishments and good academic records, he feels his employers will see him as a valuable asset for the future.

“If I had to summarize why I deserve this award...I would cite how my military training and college learning has made me an even better candidate for job opportunities, something that is true to the spirit of Marvin Curling.”

Alexandra Carlton Mahanna

ARTHUR J. GREGG AWARD

Alexandra Carlton Mahanna, of San Antonio, Texas, earned a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice in February 2022, with a 4.0 GPA. She has been a Spanish cryptologic technician (interpretive) with the U.S. Navy since 2015.

While in the Navy, Mahanna has also managed more than 400 military personnel, and has led training to help military and civilian personnel to enhance both their personal and professional careers.

Mahanna has received several military awards, including the Joint Service Achievement Medal, Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, and two Good Conduct Medals, among others. She has also dedicated more than 300 hours of volunteer time to her local San Antonio community.

Mahanna is currently pursuing a Master of Science in Organizational Development and Leadership at the University of the Incarnate Word. Upon completion, she then plans to pursue a doctorate in Organizational Psychology and then follow a career in teaching at the collegiate level. She hopes to use her “knowledge to help expand the knowledge of others.”

GRADUATE AWARD RECIPIENTS

Robert M. DeSouter

DWAYN HANFORD AWARD

Robert M. DeSouter, of Pocomoke City, Maryland, earned a Bachelor of Science in Military Leadership, in March 2022 magna cum laude with a 3.79 GPA. DeSouter is a retired U.S. Navy master chief fire controlman.

DeSouter currently works with the Department of the Navy in Virginia and serves his community extensively. He is a Vestry member, lay reader, and worker at the thrift store of his local church, and supports many of its other outreach programs. He also supports the Healthy Kids Campaign at the local YMCA and the Children's Home Foundation.

DeSouter also supports Worcester County Gold by providing school supplies and backpacks, Thanksgiving dinner, and Christmas gifts to needy families. He has also participated in many walks to raise funds for multiple health-related charities and continues to support and participate in the annual MS walk.

In addition to his bachelor's, DeSouter earned a Master of Arts in Liberal Studies in 2012 and a Bachelor of Science in Liberal Arts in 2006 from Excelsior.

Johnny Quezada

ROBERT E. KINSINGER MEMORIAL AWARD

Johnny Quezada, of Grand Prairie, Texas, earned a Master of Science in Management in March 2022, with a 4.0 GPA. He is the executive assistant of the Navy Reserve Region Readiness and Mobilization Command at Fort Worth.

Quezada's military career encompasses more than 30 years in the enlisted and officer ranks, during which he has participated in campaigns such as Operation Southern Watch, Desert Fox, Global War on Terrorism, Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and the evacuation of all military forces from Somalia. His civilian job history includes executive assistant for the Commander, Navy Reserve Region Readiness and Mobilization Command, encompassing 19 Navy Reserve Centers across seven states, and the director of military affairs for Latina Style Magazine.

Quezada has been the recipient of many military and civilian awards. His military awards include the Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Navy & Marine Corps Commendation (8), Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (5), and various others. His civilian awards include induction into the Bowie High School "Hall of Fame" in September 2021 and designation as the Bowie Alumni "Outstanding Ex" for 2021.

In addition to his Master of Science in Management, Quezada earned a Bachelor of Science in Liberal Arts from Excelsior in 2014 and an Associate in Science in Liberal Arts in 2009.

GRADUATE AWARD RECIPIENTS

Oscar J. Montesdeoca

CHARLES W. LAFFIN JR. MEMORIAL AWARD

Oscar J. Montesdeoca, of Brooklyn, New York, earned a Master of Science in Criminal Justice in March 2022, with a 3.90 GPA. Montesdeoca is a police officer and an adjunct professor with John Jay College.

Montesdeoca's path to success was not easy. His mother had two brain aneurysms when he was young, and though she did survive them, she never fully recovered her memory. Montesdeoca's mother was always a source of inspiration for him, and it helped push him through the NYPD Police Academy to become a police officer. At the same time, he also decided to pursue his master's degree with Excelsior College.

"My advice to anyone who is facing obstacles is that they should continue to push forward. The one who has the dedication and motivation will always outperform individuals who do not have the determination to strive," he says.

Montesdeoca graduated from the NYPD Police Academy in 2016 and, in 2019, became a neighborhood coordination officer. He is also a part-time criminal justice adjunct professor.

Lynda Salas

LEARNING IN PRACTICE AWARD

Lynda Salas, of Miami, Florida, earned a combined Bachelor of Science in Business/Master of Business Administration in July 2021, with a 3.63 GPA. Salas works in the insurance/reinsurance industry.

Salas has used the skills she has learned in her writing and communication courses with Excelsior to better communicate professionally and personally, whether in her workplace or at home. In her place of employment, for instance, she put together a white paper relating to the pros and cons of drones. The paper took up to 9 months to complete and once reviewed internally, it was uploaded onto the company's intranet. It consequently had more views than any white paper written within the company and was published in three business magazines.

In addition, Salas was invited by members of the Miami Latin America Claims Insurance Forum to present an in-person presentation to roughly 500 people. She incorporated material presented in the drone white paper into a power point presentation.

Salas summarizes, "the communication skills developed at Excelsior College has led to career achievements and overall employment satisfaction. My thanks to the professors who contributed to the success of my career."

GRADUATE AWARD RECIPIENTS

Phillip Klohr

DR. ROBERT L. LONG AWARD FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN
NUCLEAR ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

Phillip Klohr, of Prince Frederick, Maryland, earned a Bachelor of Science in Nuclear Engineering Technology from Excelsior in July 2021, with a 3.84 GPA. Klohr is a senior project manager at Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant.

Klohr plans project scheduling by establishing critical scheduling, performing reviews with other aspects of the organization, designing and producing reports, and facilitating resolutions to problems.

Klohr often applies what he has learned in his Excelsior courses to his current job. He says, “Not all my classes were primarily about nuclear power, and I enjoyed the ones around management. My project management course opened my eyes to how we perform things at Exelon and why.” He adds that if it wasn’t for the support of Excelsior, his girlfriend, and his son, he wouldn’t have gotten this far in his education.

After earning his bachelor’s degree, Klohr enrolled in the Master of Science in Management program and will earn that degree in July 2022.

Kristin Cebulski

ROBERT P. MAHONEY AWARD

Kristin Cebulski, of Rosamond, California, earned a Bachelor of Science in Liberal Arts in January 2022, cum laude with a 3.71 GPA. Cebulski is a technical writer with Brooksource LLC.

Cebulski completed her degree while starting a new job as a technical editor for the U.S. Air Force and while her husband was deployed overseas during a global pandemic. Her family suffered devastating familial losses during this time, but she managed to complete her assignments and exams. Cebulski was able to use the knowledge and experience she gained during her time at Excelsior College to mentor aspiring technical writers and editors.

Cebulski has volunteered and fostered animals for APET Rescue in 2019 and supported the USAF 412th MDG Group by attending the Airman Leadership School graduation of service members in 2020. In 2021, she also volunteered and donated to the Airmen’s Attic organization, established to provide military families with free donated goods, including clothing, furniture, and food. In 2021, she also supported and participated in the USAF Heart’s Apart program, which supports families of deployed servicemembers.

GRADUATE AWARD RECIPIENTS

Penny Nikitas

RUTH V. MATHENEY MEMORIAL AWARD

Penny Nikitas, of Merrimack, New Hampshire, earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing in February 2022, cum laude with a 3.68 GPA. Nikitas is a full-time nurse for Comfort Home Care, Methuen, Massachusetts; a part-time staff nurse on the medical/surgical floor for Southern Hampshire Medical Center; and a public health nurse.

Nikitas graduated from LPN school in 2000 and worked as an LPN for approximately 19 years. She has worked for Comfort Home Care for nine years, treating patients with mental illness in their homes and collaborating with community providers and forming strong therapeutic relationships. She also works part-time at Southern Hampshire Medical Center to further enhance her clinical skills. Nikitas has received certification in forensics through the University of California Riverside in 2018 and plans to pursue her master's degree with a specialty in forensics. Her goal is to become a sexual assault nurse examiner.

In addition to her bachelor's degree, Nikitas earned an Associate in Science in Nursing in 2019 from Excelsior.

Cathy A. Mosiello

MILDRED L. MONTAG MEMORIAL AWARD

Cathy A. Mosiello, of New York, New York, earned a Master of Science in Nursing Leadership and Administration of Health Care Systems in July 2021, with a 4.0 GPA. She is a patient access nurse coordinator at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center.

“Nursing has afforded me so many wonderful opportunities to assist people from all walks of life along the health continuum,” says Mosiello. In her more than four decades career as a nurse, she has supported diversity, equity, and inclusion in health care, supporting immigrant populations and those underserved. For her Excelsior Capstone projects, Mosiello focused on developing criteria to improve access to care for Black and Brown women at high risk for endometrial cancer, a project meaningful to her. Mosiello mentors new registered nurses and handles complex issues and change with ease. She received the 2022 Values in Action Recognition for her dedication and care to patients. Mosiello has completed three New York City Marathons.

In addition to her master's degree, Mosiello earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Excelsior in 2014.

GRADUATE AWARD RECIPIENTS

Michael A. Preston

OUTSTANDING INTERDISCIPLINARY LEADERSHIP AWARD

Michael A. Preston, of Lizella, Georgia, earned a Master of Science in Health Sciences in March 2022, with a 3.83 GPA. He is a retired deputy sheriff with the Bibb County Sheriff's Office.

Preston is a Gulf War veteran with more than 20 years combined service in the U.S. Army and U.S. Army Reserve. He consistently demonstrates leadership qualities and incorporates a diverse perspective to promote ethical, inclusive, and sustainable change.

As a deputy sheriff, Preston was responsible for training new employees, patrolling designated areas both on foot and in patrol vehicles to ensure safety and security, monitoring and evaluating prosecutorial data while maintaining crime scenes, and interviewing criminal targets and witnesses to uncover facts. Preston has also been a corrections lieutenant with the Georgia Department of Corrections and has also owned conveniences stores and a local sports bar in Macon, Georgia.

In addition to his master's degree, Preston earned a Bachelor of Science in Liberal Arts in 2020 and an Associate in Applied Science in Administrative/Management Studies in 2000 from Excelsior.

Rhonda Hester-Scott

JEAN M. SMITH AWARD

Rhonda Hester-Scott, of Atlanta, Georgia, earned an Associate in Applied Science in Administrative/Management Studies, in November 2021, with honors and a 3.58 GPA.

Hester-Scott is a foreign service spouse with the U.S. Department of State. She provides administrative oversight of the U.S. Embassy Manama residential security program and is a member of several mission-wide committees and councils. She maintains an active presence in the Manama Employee Association; Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Council; Black History Committee; Community Liaison Office committee; Federal Women's Book Club; First and Second Tour Officers; the Green Team, and Bahrain's American Women's Association.

She has received several awards, including two Meritorious Honor Awards as a recognition for sustaining an outstanding act of service and a group Franklin Award for distinguished public service as a diplomat working abroad.

GRADUATE AWARD RECIPIENTS

Mark Mainu

JOSHUA L. SMITH AWARD

Mark Mainu, of Barstow, California, earned a Master of Business Administration in July 2021, with a 4.0 GPA. Mainu is an assistant soccer coach.

As an assistant coach, Mainu is responsible for training youth, ages 5–17 years old, in various soccer skills to develop sportsmanship and to take part in healthy competition. He helps to develop and implement weekly practice schedules and uses his military background to train and teach children how to be responsible and respectful, how to listen, and how to work hard. Mainu says that the children he coaches motivate him to be a better and more knowledgeable person.

Mainu has used skills he learned from Excelsior to lead and work effectively and efficiently within diverse teams and maintain a high level of performance. Demonstrating adaptability, leadership, mentoring skills, and management has helped him to be a better assistance coach.

In addition to his MBA, Mainu earned a Master of Science in Management in 2020 and a Bachelor of Professional Studies in 2017, both from Excelsior.

Willie Robert Marks

(Nominated by Jessica Lanham)

STUDENT SUPPORT AWARD

Jessica Lanham, of Charleston, South Carolina, nominated her grandfather, Willie Robert Marks, of Cameron, South Carolina, for this year's Student Support Award. Lanham nominated her grandfather for his unwavering support as she pursued and earned an Associate in Science in Nursing in March 2022.

Lanham says her grandfather is a “perfect example of what it means to never give up and to persevere.” He has a seventh-grade education and was one of eight children growing up in a three-bedroom house. His mantra is “if you want something, you go out and get it; you work for it.” Lanham describes that her grandfather always instills in her how important an education is and always pushes her to do better than him, often giving her pep talks on the importance of never giving up.

Lanham credits her grandfather with pushing her to complete her RN; she is now the second grandchild to earn a college degree. She says it's all because of him and adds, “it makes me so proud to have accomplished this for not only myself, but for him.”

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

The mission of the Excelsior College Alumni Association is to foster a sense of identity and community among graduates, students, and the College. The Association is committed to advocating for the interests of alumni and supporting the College's mission of access, excellence, and diversity. The Association receives leadership from an Alumni Leadership Council selected by popular vote of alumni peers.

Alumni Leadership Council of the Excelsior College Alumni Association

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