



# THE 62ND COMMENCEMENT CLASS OF 2024

SUNDAY, MAY 19, 2024, 1:00 P.M.  
EMPIRE STATE PLAZA  
279 MADISON AVE, ALBANY, NY 12242

*Maria College founded by the Sisters of Mercy.*

“We should be shining lamps,  
giving light to all around us.”

CATHERINE MCAULEY

# PROGRAM

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## **ACADEMIC PROCESSION**

POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE • THE NATIONAL ANTHEM  
ANNE DEVLIN, MACE BEARER

## **GREETING**

DIAMOND DORSEY

## **INVOCATION**

KEYLON L. CHEESEMAN, PH.D.

## **WELCOME**

LYNN ORTALE, PH.D., PRESIDENT

## **THE MCAULEY AWARD FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE**

VIRGINIA ARBOUR, BOARD MEMBER

## **HONOREE**

SISTER KATHERINE 'KAY' GRABER, RSM '61

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF HONORARY DEGREES**

ANDREW KAUFMAN, VICE CHAIR, BOARD OF TRUSTEES

## **AWARDING OF HONORARY DOCTORATE OF HUMANE LETTERS HONOREES**

ELLEN J. ARGUST, MS, RN, CNOR

## **HONOREES**

HARRIS OBERLANDER  
MARY JO LAPOSTA, PH.D., RN, NEA-BC  
SISTER GAIL WARING, RSM '63

## **INTRODUCTION OF COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER**

PETER BYRNE, PH.D.

## **COMMENCEMENT MESSAGE TO GRADUATES**

HARRIS OBERLANDER

## **PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES FOR BACHELOR & ASSOCIATES DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES OF STUDY**

ANNE S. JUNG, PH.D., VICE PRESIDENT OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

## **CONFERRING OF DEGREES**

LYNN ORTALE, PH.D., PRESIDENT

## **ALUMNI WELCOME**

VICKI DILorenzo, VICE PRESIDENT FOR INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT

## **RITE OF COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION**

TARA FLANAGAN, PH.D., CHIEF MISSION OFFICER

## **RECESSIONAL**

*\*Please remain in place until all graduates have recessed.*

# MISSION AND VALUES

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MARIA IS A CATHOLIC COLLEGE SPONSORED BY THE SISTERS OF MERCY AND ANIMATED BY THE MERCY CHARISM. IT PROVIDES CAREER-RELEVANT, OPPORTUNITY EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CATHOLIC INTELLECTUAL TRADITION TO ALL WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM IT. MARIA IS COMMITTED TO OUTSTANDING AND HOLISTIC STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES, FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY, AND THE PURPOSIVE USE OF EVIDENCE TO DRIVE INSTITUTIONAL RENEWAL AND STUDENT SUCCESS. MARIA SEEKS TO FOSTER GRADUATES WHO RECOGNIZE AND RESPECT THE DIGNITY OF EVERY HUMAN PERSON AND WHO WILL TRANSFORM THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL INTO CARING AND COMPASSIONATE SERVICE TO OTHERS.

**Service** - Caring and compassionate service to others, in the Mercy Tradition, is offered to all, especially to those in need, both on campus and in the wider community.

**Scholarship** - Scholarship is nurtured in the relationships that arouse and nourish the spiritual gift of justice and belief in integrity, not primarily for one's own sake, but for the service of others.

**Justice** - Maria College is committed to opportunity education, a belief in fair and transparent practices, and a respect of the rights and duties of each individual. We educate and advocate for social justice, focusing on the Critical Concerns of the Sisters of Mercy.

**Diversity** - Diversity aims to create and support an inter-cultural environment that is strengthened by the development of each individual, the recognition of unique backgrounds, and respect for diverging perspectives.

**Hospitality** - Maria College is marked by a dedication to diversity and inclusion and a warm and generous welcome to all, as well as compassionate outreach to both campus and community members and groups.

# SYMBOLS AND TRADITIONS

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The custom of wearing academic regalia dates back to the 12th century when caps and gowns marked the formal admission to the body of Masters. The gowns served a practical purpose to protect teachers from the cold buildings of the time. Many of these early teachers were monks; therefore the hoods resembled a monk's cowl that attached to the gown and could be pulled over the head. Later versions featured a detached hood.

## **REGALIA**

The European tradition of academic regalia traveled to the United States. In 1895, the United States adopted a specific code for academic apparel that has had slight modifications since its adoption. Until the Civil War, students at most American universities wore caps and gowns daily while in residence. Today, the academic regalia is reserved for special occasions like inauguration and commencement ceremonies.

### **THE GOWN**

The gown is made from a black material, or signifying colors of the institution, with varying degrees of fullness. The sleeves indicate a person's academic credentials. Those with a bachelor's degree have long, pointed sleeves and the gown is worn with a closed front. A person with a master's degree wears the gown open with a distinctive full-length square sleeves that are crescent shaped at the bottom. The doctoral gowns are worn closed and have velvet panels on the front with full, round open sleeves with three chevrons. Presidential regalia has four chevrons.

### **THE HOOD**

Academic hoods tell an individual's academic story. The hood is three and a half feet long and has velvet edging. The colors of the edging indicate the discipline: apricot (nursing), brown (architecture and fine arts), citron yellow (social work), crimson (journalism/communications), dark blue (philosophy), gold (science), green (medicine), lemon (library science), light blue (education), drab (business), orange (engineering), peacock blue (public administration), pink (music), purple (law), sage green (physical education), scarlet (theology), and white (arts and humanities).

## **THE CAP**

Academic caps vary by institution. Some use black mortarboards with black or colored tassels that relate to the conferred degree. Gold tassels are frequently worn for doctoral degrees. Some institutions have adopted a tam instead of the traditional mortarboard.

## **REGALIA FOR PRESIDENT ORTALE**

President Ortale wears a specially designed gown of Maria College blue with four navy chevrons indicating her rank as President. The gown includes the new College icon, created to include the design of the stained-glass windows found in Marian Hall. The velvet of her hood is dark blue and gold, representing her Ph.D. with satin blue and gold representing Maria College. Her eight-sided tam is topped with a metallic gold tassel.

## **COLLEGE MACE**

Maria College ceremonial occasions begin with the entrance of the College mace, carried by a designated mace bearer. The mace bearer for the Commencement ceremony of Maria College is Assistant Professor of English and Senior Academic Advisor, Anne Devlin, MA.

The mace symbolizes the College's governing authority and is present only when the president and trustees are in attendance. It signifies the proceedings have official sanction.

The tradition of the mace derives from medieval times in England, when the mace was held by a bodyguard for dignitaries at ceremonial functions. Ceremonial maces are used by governing bodies worldwide, including the U.S. House of Representatives and the British Parliament.

## **THE COLLEGE SEAL**

“The Divine Lord is present in our midst to aid us in every difficulty, to enable us to surmount every obstacle on our way to His kingdom.”

- Catherine McAuley

The Maria College seal combines a series of symbols characterizing the purpose, not only of the College, but also of the Sisters of Mercy who established the College. The name “Maria” honors Our Lady of Mercy, patroness of the Sister of Mercy.

An open book, the heraldic indication of a college, occupies the center field of the seal. On the left is a shield with red and gold bars topped with a Maltese cross. This shield connotes Mercy, the essence of all Divine attributes and the distinctive feature of the humanitarian objectives undertaken by the Foundress of the Sisters of Mercy, Catherine McAuley. The Chi-Rho on the right represents the Christocentric training, the core of the College curriculum.

The crown at the top-center is a tribute to the patroness of Maria College, the Queen of Heaven. A cross reaching from crown to book symbolizes the far-reaching principles permeating all phases of Maria College life.

#### **THE PRESIDENTIAL MEDALLION**

Each president of Maria College has worn a medallion embossed with the seal of the College and the names and tenure of each past president. President Ortale, sixth president of Maria College, will wear the chain today for Maria College’s 62nd Commencement ceremony.

# THE CLASS OF 2024

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## MASTER OF SCIENCE

### OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

DWAN ALSTON  
DOROTHY HARRISON  
KELLIE EMMA MARIE KONYE  
ALEXANDRA C. TOFTE

*Degree Celebration was held August 20, 2023.*

## BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

### HEALTH & OCCUPATIONAL SCIENCES

\*\* LISA M. ANDREWS  
Ω KENDRA M. LEONARDO  
IMANI J. LOVETT  
VERONICA M. MAYHEW  
Ω MOISES A. SAMANIEGO  
\* KATHERINE KAY WETMORE

### *Nursing continued*

\*\* CASANDRA P. KENT  
\*\* SARAH MARSETT  
❖\* THOMAS ANGELO POTENCIANO  
JUANITA C. WALTERS  
❖\*\* MICHELLE ASHLEY WEINBERG

### HEALTHCARE MANAGEMENT

\* RAZAN KAMAL MOHAMAD

### NURSING RN-BS COMPLETION

\*\* LEAHANNE C. BEOJEKIAN  
\*\* LAURIE ANNE BORGE  
LISA MARIE CATALANO  
\*\* GERALDINE A. COLLITON  
SABRINA LEE CROSS  
❖\*\* SONJA MARIE DICKERMAN  
\*\* ELIZABETH M. DICKINSON  
SHANNON HIBBS  
\*\* ANA CRISTINA HORJA  
CHINA HOUSTON  
❖\*\* RACHEL ANNE ISOLDA  
\*\* MELISSA J. JOHNSEN

### PSYCHOLOGY

\*\* FRANKLIN I. ANYANECHI  
\* EMILY PAIGE GRINNELL  
\* TABITHA NOEL MORELLI  
†\*\* TAYLOR MARIE RAMIREZ  
\*\* LISA M. WILLIAMS  
\* CASEY RAYN YOUNG  
MARIVIC A. YRISH  
\* SAMUEL BRIGHTON ZUZE

\* HONORS    \*\* HIGH HONORS    \*\*\* HIGHEST HONORS

† PHI THETA KAPPA HONOR SOCIETY    ❖ OMICRON SIGMA CHAPTER SIGMA THETA TAU INTERNATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY OF NURSING

Ω DEGREE/CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS WILL BE COMPLETED BY AUGUST 2024



# THE CLASS OF 2024

## ASSOCIATE IN APPLIED SCIENCE

### NURSING

JULIA MARIE ABBATIELLO  
KELSIE MAE ADAMS  
ALLIYAH AZEEMBAKSH  
\*\* NADALIE MCGARVEY BARENDSE  
MARONDA CRYSTAL BASDEO  
†\*\* RACHEL VICTORIA BENDER  
†\*\* CANDACE JEAN BERNITT  
NOEL GRACE BERTHOTY  
†\* SUSAN M. BLYTH  
JENNIFER BUSCH  
EMILY BEA BUTLER  
KYRA AILEEN BYRNE  
SVEN C.D. CENIZA  
CORALIE BENEDICTE CHAMPAGNE  
VENESA D. CHRISTIAN  
KYLIE JEAN COTUGNO  
ARMANDO CRESCENZI  
STASHA MICHELE CUZDEY  
JAMES M. CZEREPINSKI  
\* ADRIANA BRIELLE DALO  
MICHELLE EMILY D'AMICO  
\* JORDYN NICOLE DELGUIDICE  
MADELINE GRACE DEMERS  
LAUREN N. DICARLO  
CONOR D. DITROIA  
SAMANTHA LEE DIXON  
DIAMOND DORSEY  
SHANEIL A. DUNCAN  
JUDITH ANN ELLIS  
\* LILY REBECCA EVERS  
CIARA CRISTEN FERGUSON  
\* KRYSTAL MARIE FERNANDEZ  
\* CHANZE D. FILIPPI

### *Nursing continued*

\* SHARRICE MARIE FITZGERALD  
\* REBEKAH D. GARCIA  
†\*\* CYNTHIA JEAN GARVEY  
†\*\* JESUS GOMEZ  
MELISSA RETHA GONZALEZ  
†\*\* MCKENNALEE GLORIA GORDON  
SHASHOWNAH I. GRIMES  
\* SOPHIA-MARIE ANN GROVES  
DARNELLE ANN GUERRIER  
MEAGHAN COLLEEN GURWITZ  
†\*\* DIANA D HARRYNARINE  
HAILEE ELIZABETH HART  
ALYSSA LYNN HAWKS  
MAYANNA ROSE-LYNN HAYHURST  
VIRGINIA LYNN HEBNER  
ALECIA ANNE HENNESSY  
JUSTIN ALEXANDER JACKSON  
\*\* JASMINE LEIGH JAMES  
\* ELIZABETH CARNEY JENSEN  
JAMMI M. JESIONOWSKI  
SAMANTHA M. KLIMA  
JENNIFER MARIE LACKIE-SHOOK  
KAYLA MARY LAFRANK  
REBECCA T. LAPINS  
\* RACHAEL S. LASHWAY  
CHERYL MARIE LAITTA  
BRITNIE A. LITTS  
\* ARMISH GUL MASIH  
JILL A. MASON  
AQUILA ALEXANDRI MCFARLANE  
AMANDA MARIE MEDINA  
\* ALAINA GRACE MEO  
SHAYLA A. MOORE  
ELISABETH MCKENZIE MOREHOUSE

\* HONORS    \*\* HIGH HONORS    \*\*\* HIGHEST HONORS

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# THE CLASS OF 2024

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## *Nursing continued*

- \* VALERIE LOUISE MUSSEY
- \* MIGDALLA NOVA
- \* JENNIFER O'TOOLE
- \* ARIANNA J. PAHL
- BRIANNA R. PAIGE
- JULIEANNA M. PALOMBO
- \* ADAM S. PATTERSON
- †\* JESSICA PENNINGS
- \* VASHTI PERSAUD
- ANGELA PERSAUD
- \*:\* ELLA NOELLE PHILBIN
- KAMLYN PITT
- KASEY CORINNE PSZENICZNY
- ALEKSANDRA PUZDROWSKA
- †\*\* JOSEPHINE DANIELLE RAGOSTA
- ANGELA R. RAMLALL-LATIFF
- \* SHERRINA ANTOINETTE RHODEN
- COURTNEY CHRISTINE ROBARGE
- \*:\* BRYANA A. SANCHEZ
- MERCEDES SAUER
- FAITH SCHMITT
- MADISON ELIZABETH SCHUNK
- †\*\* FELICIA JEANELLE SHORT
- \* JORDAN ELIZABETH SIMMONS
- \* ALPHI ANNIE SIMON
- KATIE E. SMI
- CRISTINA LEIGH SMITH
- \* AMANDA R. SODEN
- LAURA M. SPINA
- † SHANNON N. STANTON
- HAYLIE ROSE STOCKLEY
- \* ALYSSA NICOLE TERRY
- \* ERIN JOSEPHINE THIESSEN
- LARA JOANNE TIPPLE
- †\*\* PORSCHA VAN DYKE

## *Nursing continued*

- ASHLEY VANEGAS
- †\* JACQUELIN ROSA VIDAL
- RACHEL MARIE VILLANOVA
- \* TAYLOR A. VON SCHRADER
- EMMA CHRISTINE WADE
- †\*\* CHELSEA MARI WELSH
- MARISSA LINN WILHELM
- \* SOPHEY TESSA WILLIS
- EMILY JEAN WOODRUFF
- CALEIGH GRACE WOODS

## **OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT**

- \*:\* HILA BELSKY
- \*:\* RACHEL MECKES BRUNDAGE
- GABRIELLA M. CRUZADO
- \*\* CASEY LEE GREGORY
- †\*\* MATTHEW PETER HOPPER
- \*:\* KEITH N. HORNE
- LAUREN A. IACOVELLI
- KENDRA M. LEONARDO
- IMANI J. LOVETT
- VERONICA M. MAYHEW
- \*\* TIMOTHY MICHAEL MONROE
- Ω ALISON O. SPOSATO
- \*:\* SYDNEY M. STOWELL
- \*\* Ω CACHE TAFFE
- \* JENNIE UPADHYAYA
- \*:\* Ω OLIVIA ZIELASKOWSKI

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# THE CLASS OF 2024

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## ASSOCIATE IN SCIENCE

### GENERAL STUDIES

MAE RILEY CLARKE  
RYAN MARK WOODS

## CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

### PRACTICAL NURSE

ABIOLA R. ADEJUMO  
KAYLA MARIE ARCHER  
PARRIE DEON BOSTICK  
JACQUELINE THERESA CHRISTINE BRISEE  
MORGAN PATRICIA BROWNELL  
HEATHER BUCKLAND  
SELENA MARIE COBIAN  
BROOKE MARIE COLVIN  
GABRIELLE LEA DUNN  
LUKE THOMAS DUTCHER  
CARINA ESPINAL  
ELIANIE FIGUEROA  
NATASSIA C. FITZGERALD  
HOPE VICTORIA GADOMSKI  
GUADALUPE GOMEZ TORRALBA  
KAYLA LARRIÀ GROSS  
BYADIR G. HABIBALLA  
CYNTHIA MARIE HITCHCOCK  
STEPHANIE YVETTE HODGES  
ANASHTAÁ SHIVONDA HOLLOWAY  
EMMA S. ITSKOV  
SHANNEL EBONY JACKSON  
JESSICA ANN JOHANNESSEN  
BARBARA A. JONES  
TIFFANY DANIELLE KAISER

### *Practical Nurse continued*

TRACY L. KOHLS  
MARIAROSA KONOPKA  
SARAH ROSE LORETTE  
THERESSA LOUIS  
FLORA K. MAMEDOVA  
BRITTANY L. McCUMBER  
ERICA MICHELLE McRAE-YOUNG  
HANNAH J. MILLER  
SANDRA MIORIN  
FARZANA NASRI  
CHASTITY S. ORELLANES  
PURITY NAIMAH RAHMAN- MORGAN  
MICHAEL HANNAH ROCK  
DAKWAN M. RODRIGUEZ  
LEVIE ORTADO SECOR  
DEBBONY O. SMALLS  
DANIEL N. SMITH  
ALYSSA M. STELL  
SHAQUAHNAH J. STREETER  
MIGUELINA VASQUEZ -KETTER  
LISA M. VAUGHN  
LKRH J. WALKER  
DANIELLE LEE WHITEHILL  
NICOLE LOUISE WHITING  
SHAINA LEE WILLWERTH

*Degree candidacy for the above is based on academic information effective  
May 18, 2024, and is subject to adjustments until the records are finalized.*

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CAROLE MONTEPARE '71

SISTER ELLEN MURRAY, RSM, PH.D.

THOMAS NARDACCI

KATHLEEN OWENS, PH.D.

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