



*One Hundred Fifty Fourth*

# **COMMENCEMENT**

The Thirteenth Day of May  
Two Thousand and Twenty Three  
at Half Past Ten O'Clock in the Morning

Blackburn College Campus

***WHERE LEADERS RISE***

# BLACKBURN COLLEGE

## TRUSTEES OF BLACKBURN COLLEGE

Dan Anderson '74

Lisa Black-Gomez '81

Kenneth R. Deihl '78

David Dorris '69

James Faust '64

Fran Goodman '93

Jennifer Hamilton '70

Rochelle Henderson '92

Thomas Heinz '70

Cynthia LaMar '73

Cress Maddox

George E. Malo '66

Stanley M. Pillman

George Preckwinkle

Sarah Robison '84

James D. Sandfort

Jennifer Shelby

Paul Tepikian '77

Madonna Reed Tideman '78

## EMERITI TRUSTEES OF BLACKBURN COLLEGE

Charles J. Beetz '62

Lois Byerly '51

Lois DeFleur '58

Paul DeLano '92

William Jewell '57

Lonnie Lee

Robert Marovich

Bryan Meyers

David Olsen '77

John F. Schmidt

Richard Wier '61

Steven V. Wilkinson

Edward Young '62

## PRESIDENT

Gregory J. Meyer, D. Min

## MARSHALS

James Bray, B.A., Ph.D., College Marshal

Montreal Thomas '23, B.A., Student Marshal

## SPEAKERS/PRESENTERS/CONDUCTOR

Nikki Budzinski, B.A., Keynote Speaker

Karla McCain, B.A., Ph.D., Provost

Lisa Black-Gomez '81, B.A., Ph.D., Alumni Board President

Al Sturgeon, B.A., J.D., Dean of Students

Jody Sturgeon, B.S., Dean of Work

Joseph Welch, B.A., Ph.D., Professor of Music

## BEGINNINGS

Blackburn College was founded in 1837 by the Reverend Gideon Blackburn, D.D. (1772-1838), a Presbyterian minister. Chartered in 1857 as Blackburn Theological Seminary, the institution was incorporated in 1869 as The Blackburn University. Blackburn College enjoys covenant relationships with the Presbytery of Great Rivers, the Synod of Lincoln Trails of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and the Carlinville Federated Church. The first commencement was held in June 1870 for a class of one woman and six men.

# COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

## ORDER OF PROCESSION

The Mace  
The Colors  
The Banner  
The Student Marshal  
The Candidates for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts  
The Choir  
The Faculty  
Administrative Officers and Dignitaries  
The Trustees  
The President

## THE STANDARDS

The chief device of the Banner is the College Seal, hand embroidered. The seven squares that pierce the strap band of the fanon recall the Liberal Arts of university education in the Middle Ages—The Trivium: Grammar, Rhetoric, and Dialectic, and the more advanced Quadrivium: Arithmetic, Geometry, Astronomy, and Music—broad studies that are the piers for much of what is taught in universities and colleges today. The three bands that complete the Banner stand for the fundamental virtues: Faith, Hope, and Charity.

## THE MACE

In keeping with the general custom, the authority of the President of Blackburn College, the service of former Presidents, Acting Presidents, and Principals, and the allegiance of the College to the cause of liberty in scholarship and learning are represented by a Mace. Here the Emblem is a shaft of black walnut wood fitted with bronze cast in the College Foundry. The head of the Mace carries engraved on its facets the Seal, and the names and the tenures of those who have governed the College since 1859, the first year of instruction. The foot bears the names and familiar badge of the College, The Beaver, *Castor canadensis*. The Mace is borne by the College Marshal at the head of College processions.

## ABOUT OUR SPECIAL GUEST



Congresswoman Nikki Budzinski is a lifelong champion for working families, a Springfield resident and the proud Representative for Illinois' 13th Congressional District.

A native of Illinois, Nikki knows that our communities thrive when the middle class is strong. But for too long, working hard and playing by the rules hasn't been paying off like it should. She believes that families deserve better, and she's spent her entire career fighting to help restore the American Dream for people like her grandpa, a union painter, and her grandma, a public school teacher.

That's why she joined the labor movement, and fought to get firefighters, grocery workers and meatpackers better training, wages and workplace safety protections. It's why she led negotiations to raise Illinois' minimum wage to \$15 an hour and chaired the Broadband Advisory Board to expand internet access to rural communities. And it's why she helped the Biden-Harris Administration implement the American Rescue Plan and establish the Made in America Office to create jobs and strengthen our economy.

Nikki came to Congress to build on that work. As she brings the voices of people in Central and Southern Illinois to Washington, she's focused on putting their needs over petty politics, reaching for compromise and delivering results for the communities she serves.

*The 154th Commencement of Blackburn College*  
**ORDER OF COMMENCEMENT**

Dr. Gregory J. Meyer  
President of the College  
Presiding

Dr. James Bray  
College Marshal

**\*PROCESSIONAL MARCH**

*Trumpet Voluntary*  
The Metropolitan Brass Quintet

Jeremiah Clark

**\*NATIONAL ANTHEM**

*Star Spangled Banner*  
Blackburn College Choir  
(audience participation)

Francis Scott Key

**INVOCATION**

Mr. Al Surgeon

**\*HYMN**

*The Blackburn College Hymn*  
(words on back page)

Lowe-Forbes

**WELCOME**

Dr. Gregory J. Meyer

**THE COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS**

Rep. Nikki Budzinski

# COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

## PRESENTATIONS

## PRESENTER

### ACADEMIC AWARDS

Academic Departmental Awards

Dr. Karla McCain

Senators Vince and Deanna Demuzio Education and Leadership Awards

Hudson Prize for Scholarly or Creative Accomplishment

Hudson Prize for Contributions to College Community

### SENIOR STUDENT LEADERSHIP RECOGNITION

Ms. Jody Sturgeon

### ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AWARDS

Dr. Lisa Black-Gomez '81  
Alumni Board President

Acknowledgment of the Senior Representatives to the Alumni Board

Outstanding Graduate Award

### CONFERRING OF BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREES

Dr. Gregory J. Meyer  
Dr. Karla McCain

### MOVING OF TASSELS AND CHARGE TO THE CLASS OF 2023

Dr. Gregory J. Meyer

### BENEDICTION

Mr. Al Sturgeon

### COLLEGE CHOIR

*Fly Away Home*  
Blackburn College Choir

Pinkzebra

### \*RETIRING PROCESSION

*Pomp and Circumstance*  
The Metropolitan Brass Quintet

arr. Sir Edward Elgar

\* Members of the audience standing

## CLASS OF 2023

### SUMMA CUM LAUDE

Elizabeth Jane Bowyer - Valedictorian

Lexi Kelly Snow - Salutatorian

Alyssa Dothager  
Aaron Eugene Lederbrand

Josephine Lucia Manar  
Samuel Edward Sumrow

Montreal Demonte Thomas

### MAGNA CUM LAUDE

MacKenzie Ruth Adams  
Lexie Janel Black  
Dade Hughston Bradley  
Alexander Harrison Jasper  
Megan Paige Jones

Sabrina Rose Kelsey  
Molly Elizabeth McEuen  
Skyler Lemoyne McManus  
Tess Michele Saathoff  
Emilee Lynn Simmons

Quentin Joseph Dale Smith  
Jessica Tomson  
Miriam Kamilla Sia Wali-Uddin  
Autumn Wilson  
Kenneth James Lee Wolf

### CUM LAUDE

Savannah J. Branham  
Mercy Daniels

Paige Ann Davidson  
Cameron Shinall

Elizabeth Mae Wells

### BACHELOR OF ARTS

MacKenzie Ruth Adams  
*Physical Education With K-12  
Certification*

Chanz Aldridge  
*Business Management*

Sydney Rae Bates  
*Medical Laboratory Science*

Mitchell William Binder  
*Justice Administration*

Lexie Janel Black >  
*Elementary Education*

Elizabeth Jane Bowyer\* >  
*Justice Administration /  
Political Science - General Track*

Dade Hughston Bradley\*  
*Biology - Environmental Track*

Savannah J. Branham  
*Justice Administration*

Raven Lashonda Brooks  
*Music - Vocal Performance*

Amaris Helena Charland  
*Art*

River Emery Cummings  
*Graphic Design*

Mercy Daniels  
*Creative Writing*

Paige Ann Davidson  
*Physical Education With K-12  
Certification*

Alyssa Dothager >  
*Early Childhood Education*

Madison Gayle Duncan  
*Elementary Education*

Megan Rae Eckelberry\*  
*Art*

Sakura Anita Fagan\*  
*Creative Writing*

Kelsey Kay Farris  
*Educational Studies -  
Education Paraprofessional  
Track*

Kolby Reed Fernandes  
*Sport Management*

Vanessa Marie Gabl  
*Computer Science -  
Cybersecurity Track /  
Mathematics - General Track*

Jonathan Brian Gardner  
*Justice Administration*

Gage Andrew Hemmann  
*Business With Management  
Emphasis*

Lexi Marie Hoffman\*  
*Business With Marketing  
Emphasis*

# CLASS OF 2023

**Adam Ray Holm**

*Sport Management*

**Tyler James Jackson**

*Justice Administration*

**Alexander Harrison Jasper** >

*Secondary Social Science Education:  
History*

**Megan Paige Jones**

*Business With Accounting Emphasis*

**Sabrina Rose Kelsey\***

*Business With Management*

*Emphasis and Human*

*Resources Management Emphasis*

**Kirsten Alanna Marie Kerley**

*Interdisciplinary Studies*

**Aaron Eugene Lederbrand\*** >

*Educational Studies - Education*

*Paraprofessional Track*

**Josephine Lucia Manar\*** >

*Elementary Education*

**Molly Elizabeth McEuen** >

*Elementary Education*

**Ashly Nichole McFadden**

*Graphic Arts*

**Skyler Lemoyne McManus** >

*Justice Administration*

**Wesley Allen McMillen\***

*Creative Writing*

**Maggie Ann Hope McMillin**

*Justice Administration*

**Myra'Nesha McNeil**

*Creative Writing*

**Stefan William Miller**

*Biology - General Track*

**Samuel W. Mount**

*Business With Management*

*Emphasis*

**Gabrielle Oglesby**

*Biology - General Track*

**Jeremy Joseph Parker**

*Biology - Pre-Medical & Other*

*Health Professions Track*

**Braden Joseph Plunkett**

*Biology - General Track*

**Mary Raymond**

*Elementary Education*

**Courtnee Capri Riley**

*Sport Management*

**Michael Alexander Rodriguez**

*Sport Management*

**Jaquelyn R. Rose\***

*Business With General Emphasis*

**Tess Michele Saathoff**

*Biology - General Track*

**Riley L. Sandretto**

*Secondary Social Science Education:*

*History*

**Jayden Rhen Sansone**

*Business Management*

**Jayden Joseph Serafini**

*Business With Management*

*Emphasis*

**Cameron Shinall**

*Graphic Design*

**Emilee Lynn Simmons**

*Early Childhood Education*

**Quentin Joseph Dale Smith\***

*Secondary Social Science Education:*

*History*

**Lexi Kelly Snow\*** >

*Psychology / History*

**Mystikal T. Suggs**

*Business Management*

**Samuel Edward Sumrow\*\*** >

*Graphic Design*

**Peter Andrew Terenzio**

*Justice Administration*

**Chelsea Lynn Terranova**

*Justice Administration*

**Montreal Demonte Thomas\*** >

*Mathematics - General Track /*

*Political Science - Law Track*

**Levi Ryne Thompson**

*Computer Science - Game Design*

*and Development Track*

**Mildred Evaline Thompson**

*Biology - General Track*

**Jessica Tomson**>

*Elementary Education*

**Miriam Kamilla Sia Wali-Uddin\*** >

*Justice Administration*

**Elizabeth Mae Wells** >

*Elementary Education*

**Antonio Dewayne White Jr.**

*Business With Human Resources*

*Management Emphasis*

**Autumn R. Wilson** >

*Justice Administration*

**Kenneth James Lee Wolf**

*Elementary Education*

*Inclusion of name in this program does not constitute evidence of graduation.  
Degree conferral and honors are verified by an official transcript.*

\* Members of Alpha Chi National Honor Scholarship Society  
• Manager in the Work Program

> Department Honors—Awarded to students who have earned a grade point average of 3.8 or above on a 4.0 scale in their major field of study and 3.5 in all courses.

# THE BLACKBURN COLLEGE HYMN

*Lowe-Forbes*

*Blackburn, Blackburn, Alma Mater*

*Unify these years of youth:*

*Fix on us thy three-fold blessing –*

*Friendship, work, and will to Truth.*

*Blackburn, now thy sons and daughters,*

*Pledging heart and hand and mind,*

*Join themselves to thy first calling,*

*One For Christ and all Mankind.*

## ACADEMIC DRESS

Academic dress is the formal dress of the brotherhood of learning, a community begun a thousand years ago. The attire makes known a degree held by the wearer, the field of that degree, and the institution which granted the degree. These particulars are simply stated by the shape of the sleeve of the gown and by the colors of the hood.

The Bachelor sleeve is pointed. The Master sleeve is oblong. The Doctor sleeve, sometimes gathered at the wrist, is bell-shaped, and is barred. Another badge of the Doctorate is the cap with the tassel of gold.

The field of the degree is stated by the color of the neck cloth of the hood. In every land the neck cloth that is scarlet signifies Theology, the premier study, but the color signs of other fields vary from one academic jurisdiction to another.

Throughout the United States a degree in Agriculture is always represented by a neck cloth of the color maize, Architecture or Fine Arts by the color brown, Business or Commerce or Accountancy drab, Dentistry lilac, Economics copper, Education light blue, Engineering orange, Forestry russet, Home Economics maroon, Journalism crimson, Law purple, Liberal Arts white, Music pink, Pharmacy olive green, Philosophy and any field it embraces blue, Physical Education sage green, Public Administration or Foreign Service peacock blue, Public Health salmon pink, Science golden yellow, Social Work citron, Speech or Oratory silver gray, Veterinary Science gray.

In America the most frequently awarded honorary doctorates are Doctor of Divinity (D.D.) – Doctor of Fine Arts (D.F.A.) – Doctor of Humane Letters (L.H.D.) – Doctor of Laws (LL.D.) – Doctor of Letters (Litt.D.) – Doctor of Music (D.Mus.) – and Doctor of Science (D.Sc.).

The degree of Master of Arts (M.A.), commonly an earned one, is given as an honor occasionally.

The institution which granted the degree, earned or *honoris causa*, is made known by the hue or hues of the lining of the hood; and in academic processions it is this heraldry which is the major brightness against the medieval black still used for the gown by most institutions in this country.

Abroad, much of the academic dress abides by earlier, more diverse and vivid forms.

## PRESIDENTIAL GARB

The responsibility of the President is represented by a collar of office. The collar links are silver discs in silver oblongs and the pendant is an image of the College seal. The gown of scarlet is worn by the President on ceremonial occasions. The color, emblematic of theology, reminds us that the College had its beginning as a Theological Seminary.

COLLEGE  
**Blackburn**

**WHERE LEADERS RISE**