

PIEDMONT UNIVERSITY

UNDERGRADUATE & GRADUATE COMMENCEMENT

Friday, December 12, 2025 | 10:00 a.m.
Johnny Mize Athletic Center



PROGRAM

Presiding

Marshall M. Criser III

President of the University

PROCESSIONAL “The Liberty Bell March” *United States Army Field Band*
The audience will rise as the academic procession begins and remain standing until after the invocation.

INVOCATION The Reverend Joyce Acree

HYMN “The Star Spangled Banner” Madisen Danielle Smith
Piedmont University Undergraduate Student, BA Music Education

Oh, say can you see by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming;
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming?
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.
Oh, say does that star-spangled banner yet wave,
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER President Criser

ADDRESS Tricia Shriver
Assistant Professor, College of Education

CONFERRING OF DEGREES Vickie Turner
Vice President for Academic Affairs

The conferring of degrees is authorized by the Board of Trustees upon the recommendation of the President and Faculty. Vice President for Academic Affairs, Vickie Turner, will introduce the Dean of the college and Dr. Bob Glass, Dean of Libraries and College Librarian, will read the names of the candidates. Chairman Arrendale and President Criser will award diplomas to recipients of the Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Fine Arts, Bachelor of Science, Master of Science, Master of Business Administration, Master of Arts in Teaching, Master of Arts, Education Specialist, and Doctor of Education.



HYMN TO THE ALMA MATER..... **Piedmont Singers**
Please rise as Piedmont Singers perform the Hymn to the Alma Mater. Remain standing until the conclusion of the recessional.

<p>Verse 1</p> <p>Where the Georgian hills grow purple In the sunset glow, Proudly stands our Alma Mater In the vale below.</p>	<p>Verse 2</p> <p>As around the mighty oak tree Clings the ivy vine, So around thee, dear old Piedmont Loyal hearts entwine. (Refrain)</p>
<p>Refrain</p> <p>Green and Gold float on for aye, Old Piedmont for thee, We, thy loyal sons and daughters Bless thy memory.</p>	<p>Verse 3</p> <p>Here's to thee, then dear old Piedmont May you ever stand As an emblem of the noblest In our fair Southland. (Refrain)</p>

BENEDICTION..... **The Reverend Joyce Acree**
RECESSIONAL **“Radetzky March”***Johann Strauss Sr.*

Faculty Marshal	Carlos Camp, <i>Professor of Biology</i>
Registrar	Melissa Fortner
Student Marshals	Sheena Patrick, <i>Associate Registrar</i> Lily Simpson, <i>Registrar’s Specialist</i> Yareli Vazquez, <i>Registrar’s Specialist</i> Ellawyn Ketch, <i>Registrar’s Specialist</i>
Gonfalon Bearer	Emma Forester

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER

Professor Tricia J. Shriver, Ed.S., currently serves as the Chair of Elementary Education at Piedmont University, bringing 28 years of experience as a teacher, literacy specialist, and instructional leader. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education from Mercer University (1997), a Master’s in Curriculum and Instruction (2006), and an Education Specialist degree in Educational Leadership (2017) from Central Michigan University. Her advanced training includes Reading Coach certification from Teachers College at Columbia University and extensive preparation in structured literacy and dyslexia intervention through Orton-Gillingham.

Shriver’s career spans public and private schools across Georgia, including Douglas County Schools, Greater Atlanta Christian, and the founding team of the lower school at Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School. At Piedmont University, she serves on the leadership team, helped write the dyslexia endorsement, and has contributed at the state level through her role in developing the Teach in the Peach APP for recruitment and educator pipeline initiative. Additionally, Shriver has served on the Faculty Senate, the Symposium Committee, SAIL, and currently serves on the One Book Habersham Team.

Professor Shriver has proudly raised three sons, Avery, Gavin, and Maddox and resides in Habersham County.

DEGREE CANDIDATES

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Steve Jacobs, Dean

BACHELOR OF ARTS

James M. Arbitter
History and Government

Nicole A. Brown
Criminal Justice

Haylie Auburn Collins
Theatre Arts

Madison Grace Cronic
Art

Tanea Davis
Art

Christa Delaney Ellison
Human Services Administration

Caitlynn Marie Emfinger
English Education

Abby Noel Hutchinson
Sociology

Tamia Rickell Johnson
Criminal Justice

Tanisha Keyara Johnson
English & Mass Communications

Kelbi Christina Sceau
Political Science

Braden James Simms
Criminal Justice

Madisen Danielle Smith
Music Education

Breanna H. Taylor
Human Services Administration

Grace Tollett
Criminal Justice

Kalina Rose Wolff
English & Psychology

BACHELOR OF FINE ARTS

Donnie Ramey
Art

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

Mary Beall
Neuroscience

Emmi Irene Chalfant
Forensic Science

Kaitlynn Crawford
Forensic Science

Katelyn Reese Gunderson
Forensic Science

Taylor McKenzie Herrmann
Forensic Science

Lachlan Russell Holliday
Engineering Physics

Amanda Lai
Forensic Science

Ana Gabriela Lopez Prado
Computer Science

Jasmine Lowery
Forensic Science

Emma Jane McBrayer
Engineering Physics

Andrew Nolt
Interdisciplinary Studies

Peter Sligh
Interdisciplinary Studies

Cooper Anjanette Williams
Neuroscience

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Tiffany L. Barnhart-Holly

Sarah Mae Robbins

WALKER COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

J. Kerry Waller, Dean

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

Laura Katherine Dean
Business Administration

Ben Henderson Kolbie
Business Administration

Timothy Eugene Love
Business Administration

Jackson Drake Lovell
Accounting & Business Administration

Gavin Ellis Oglesby
Business Administration

Christopher Damon Thompson
Business Administration

Amanda Kaye Turpen
Business Administration

Benjamin Blaze Watkins
Business Administration

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Nathan Benton Boyce

Cameron Walker Capelle

Danice Rose Evans

Jack Michael Gilsenan

MASTER OF SCIENCE

John C. Foster

R.H. DANIEL COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCE

Jaime Johnson-Huff, Dean

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

Layton Wayne Bradford
Applied Health Science

Devron Burks
Communication Sciences and Disorders

Eric Glen Armando Fewell
Applied Health Science

Katherine Virginia Hubbard
Sport and Fitness Administration

Delroy Demetrick Mattis
Exercise and Sport Science

Alexandria Wingate
Health Care Administration

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Octavius Mulligan, Dean

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Courtney Olivia Blalock
Elementary Education

Natalie Alexis Caldwell
Elementary Education

Bradley Cole Dixon
Elementary Education

Rebecca Lynn Dove
Elementary Education

Tiffany A. Foots
Elementary Education

Haley Jennifer Haynes
Elementary Education

Savannah Gates Jerome
Middle Grades Education

Gillian Ann Mills
Educational Studies

Neida Pacheco Solano
Elementary Education

Julie D. Power
Elementary Education

Isabelle Slaughter
Elementary Education

Rachel Elizabeth Thrash
Elementary Education

MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING

Minerva Albernás
Elementary Education

Jennifer Arnold
Elementary Education

Kelsey Bailey
Secondary Education

Jeletta Baker
Elementary Education

Abeba Kassaye Barea
Special Education

Joshua Barge
Elementary Education

Mykissinee Bussey
Middle Grades Education

Kenyatta Angell Caldwell
Elementary Education

Martina Campbell
Elementary Education

Alexis Michelle Carson
History Education

Layne Colwell
Elementary Education

Amber Briana Dunbar
Middle Grades Education

Kathryn M. Eskew
Elementary Education

Jessica Gibby
Elementary Education

Abigail Godfrey
Elementary Education

Michael Shannon Green
Broadfield Science Education

Catherine Hamby
Special Education

Amber Darlette Harmon
Special Education

Leila Heath
Middle Grades Education

Jessica Henry
Elementary Education

Mary Hershberger
Elementary Education

Shania Jolly
Elementary Education

Jannet Kall
Elementary Education

Charlotte Adams Kegley
Elementary Education

Kamesha Vines Kelly
Special Education

Wiley Kimbrough
Middle Grades Education

Madison Kuhn
Elementary Education

Cori Lee
Art Education

Audrey Metcalf
Elementary Education

Susan Marilyn Methvin
Special Education

Zachary Andruw Norman
Elementary Education

Nicoya Pinder Osborn
Special Education

David R. Pierce
History Education

Emily Ray
Elementary Education

Nicholas Rodriguez
Elementary Education

Sheila Sanchez
Special Education

Amanda Leigh Sexton
Elementary Education

Raphael L'Shaun Smith
Special Education

Erika Sevon Spriggs
Elementary Education

Lakesha V. Swinson-Sheppard
Special Education

Kristen Watkins
Elementary Education

Stephanie Lynne Watson
Elementary Education

Melissa Garner Wilkes
Elementary Education

Lauryn Williams
Elementary Education

MASTER OF ARTS

Krista Carpenter
Middle Grades Education

Joshua Chase
English Education

Chera LeRoy Collins
Elementary Education

Jessika Gilbert
Elementary Education

Dallas Gillespie
Art Education

Madison Goodwin
Elementary Education

Chelsey Russell Harris
Elementary Education

Rachel LeAnne Yzenski Johnson
English Education

Joshua King
Middle Grades Education

Mikaela Lewis
Middle Grades Education

Kristal Matthews
Elementary Education

Brittany L. Portwood
Elementary Education

Katherine Pritchett
English Education

Kayla Quakenbush
Elementary Education

Timothy Reeck
Middle Grades Education

Carissa Rutland-Smith
Elementary Education

Tiffany X. Vaughn
Educational Studies

Davlin Elisha Wilson
Elementary Education

Ashley Wright
Art Education

EDUCATION SPECIALIST

Tesha Alexander

Katherine Anderson

Erin Atkinson

Clineisha Bailey

Seth Joseph Bates

Jennifer Brown

Jalen Burton
Kristie Lashae Butler
Jasmine Coleman
Jane Bomar Crim
Emma Daklouché
Andre Douglas Davis
Ralind Elmore Davis
Caroline Dersheimer
Allison Franks
Tracy Gilner
Emily McCall Gross
Shaun Harrison
Jessica Hayes
Michelle H. Henderson
Monica Nicole Jackson
Tamara King
Stephen Lawrence-Carroll
Jazmine Lawrence-Diallo
Courtney Des Lee
Amanda Mayo
Brianica Monique McClendon
Steven Orlandi
DeNeil Preston
Jennifer Quattlebaum
Hudson Lee Rubio
Pamela L. Serra
Kelli Sherwood

Jennifer D. Stephens
Jerlisa Taylor
Franck Derick Totchum Tazo
Abby Spruill Tippens
Angela Ugbajah
Princess Walton
Lauren Wildeman

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Chase Armour

B.S.Ed., University of Georgia
M.Ed., Kennesaw State University
Ed.S., Piedmont University

Dissertation: *Evaluating Instructional Delivery Models for English Learners: A Causal-Comparative Study of Reading and Language Outcomes*
Dr. Toni Bailey, Committee Chair

William J. Lee

B.A., University of Georgia
M.A.T., University of Georgia
Ed.S., Piedmont University

Dissertation: *How Education Can Prepare for the Future of Remote Learning: Revisiting Educator Experiences of the Pandemic*
Dr. Sarah Sumners, Committee Chair

Tiara Mensinger

B.S., University of Georgia
M.S.Ed., Kennesaw State University
Ed.S., Mercer University

Dissertation: *Becoming Real Teachers: A Qualitative Program Evaluation of Culturally Responsive Teaching Integration in New Teacher Induction*
Dr. Sarah Sumners, Committee Chair

Janice A. Wright

B.S., Medgar Evers College
M.S.Ed., Brooklyn College
Ed.S., Piedmont University

Dissertation: *Advancing Without Achievement: Discrepancies in Social Promotion and Their Impact on Educational Equity*
Dr. Toni Bailey, Committee Chair

*The list of degree candidates was compiled prior to commencement, and the status of some candidates may have changed since that time.
The listing of the names in this program in no way implies an obligation on the part of Piedmont University to award a given degree.*

HONOR SOCIETIES, ORGANIZATIONS, & GROUPS

ALPHA CHI

Nicole A. Brown

Tamia Rickell Johnson

ALPHA LAMBDA DELTA

Caitlynn Marie Emfinger

Rachel Elizabeth Thrash

Cooper Anjanette Williams

ALPHA PSI OMEGA

Haylie Auburn Collins

AMERICAN MARKETING ASSOCIATION

Jackson Drake Lovell

CHI ALPHA SIGMA

Madison Grace Cronic

Katherine Virginia Hubbard

Savannah Gates Jerome

Ben Henderson Kolbie

Jasmine Lowery

DELTA MU DELTA

Ben Henderson Kolbie

Gavin Ellis Oglesby

KAPPA MU EPSILON

Katelyn Reese Gunderson

Savannah Gates Jerome

Amanda Lai

M.A.N.E.

Courtney Olivia Blalock

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

Cooper Anjanette Williams

PIEDMONT STOLES & CORDS

Graduation stoles and cords represent achievement, success, or membership at Piedmont University.

R.H. Daniel School of Nursing

Apricot stole

Athletics

Green stole

Criminalists Club

Blue stole

Organization:

American Marketing Association

Navy Blue, White cord

Campus Activities Board (CAB)

Light Yellow cord

Fellowship of Christian Athletics (FCA)

Royal Blue, Red, Gold cord

Health Science Leadership Academy

Old Gold, White cord

M.A.N.E.

Forest Green, Silver cord

Piedmont University Student Nurses Assoc, NSNA

Silver, Light Blue, Purple cord

Piedmont Peer Tutors

Service Pin

Resident Assistants

Service Pin

SAIL

Service Pin

Student Government Association

Green, Gold cord

Team Piedmont Ambassadors

Forest Green, Black cord

Zeta Tau Alpha

Teal, Gray cord

Society:

Alpha Alpha Alpha (Tri-Alpha)

Navy Blue, Gray/Silver cord, and Service Pin

Alpha Chi

Sapphire Blue, Emerald Green Cord

Alpha Lambda Delta

Red, Gold, White cord

Alpha Psi Omega

Light Blue, Gold cord

Chi Alpha Sigma

Gold, Black cord, and Gold medallion

College of Nursing and Health Science Honor Society

Green, White cord

Delta Mu Delta

Purple, Gold cord

Kappa Mu Epsilon

Rose Pink, Silver cord

Lillian E. Smith Scholars

White cord

Natural Science Honors Program

White, Gold cord

National Society of Leadership and Success

Silver, Black cord

Psi Chi

Blue, Silver cord

Sigma Tau Delta

Cardinal Red, Black cord

Society for Collegiate Journalists

Scarlet, Gray cord

COMMENCEMENT

COMMENCEMENT

When Piedmont was founded in 1897, commencement was a five-day affair filled with speeches, sermons, academic and debating competition, dinners, and—finally—the conferral of degrees. Over the years, the time allotted for commencement was shortened, a reflection of the quickened pace of the modern era. Piedmont University still retains many commencement customs and traditions that date back to the 12th century, including the use of the mace, gonfalon, and academic garb.

MACE

The Piedmont mace was handcrafted by Dr. Patrick Taylor, former chair of the Department of Art. The staff is carved from American cherry wood, and the handle is leather. The base is cast in bronze. The pommel, located at the bottom of the staff, symbolically represents the foundation of the University and is inscribed with the date 1897.

The crown on top of the mace is a globe representing the University's commitment to the preparation of students for global work and service. The mace and attached seals represent the authority of Piedmont University to award academic degrees as prescribed by the institution's charter from the State of Georgia.

The flame of learning, cast in an alloy of bronze, sterling silver, and gold and mounted on the top of the mace, symbolizes student acquisition of knowledge from an academically accomplished and talented Piedmont University faculty. The tip of the flame forms an open hand representing the quest for spiritual and intellectual development in service to humankind.

GONFALON

Another Medieval trapping still used in modern commencement traditions at Piedmont University is the gonfalon, a banner hung from a crossbar instead of from a pole as commonly used for flags. A gonfalon is known as a standard, and in Italian tradition the "gonfalonier" is the standard bearer. Piedmont uses a ceremonial gonfalon that bears the University seal and is displayed at the head of the processional column.

ACADEMIC DRESS

Academic dress originates with the founding of European universities in the 12th century. All Medieval students were clerks (clerici) and wore the dress of the secular clergy. The oldest article of academic dress worn was the robe (roba), a loose gown, over which hung the habit (cappa), usually a kind of tunic with short, wide sleeves. The Medieval hood (caputium) could be gathered around the neck or pulled up on the head as a turban. There were three kinds of caps: the round pileus, reserved for doctoral dignity; the tena, a round cap with strings that were tied under the chin and worn by jurists; and the square birretium.

The basic design of academic costumes in the U.S. was established in 1895 and was first used at Piedmont by the class of 1902. There are three types of gowns, three styles of hoods, and two kinds of cap tassels used for the American academic garb. The bachelor's gown has long, pointed, open sleeves. The master's gown is similar but has longer sleeves that are closed at the bottom. The doctoral gown has full-length lapels of velvet and bell-shaped sleeves with three horizontal velvet bars. The color of gowns is usually black, although some colleges have specified that doctoral students may wear gowns showing distinctive colors.

The hood varies according to respective academic degrees, with the doctoral hood being longer and fuller in shape than the others. The academic field of study can be determined by the color of the velvet facing sewn on the hood. The color represents the academic field of study as follows: white for the arts; gold-yellow for science; drab for business administration; lemon for librarianship; scarlet for theology; brown for fine arts; light blue for education; pink for music; and dark blue for philosophy. The hood is lined in silk displaying the colors of the degree-granting institution. Tassels for bachelor's and master's are black. The doctoral tassels are gold.

Piedmont faculty have earned degrees at a number of post-baccalaureate institutions, and most wear the doctoral hood. The hood colors worn by some Piedmont faculty represent the following academic institutions: purple and gold (Louisiana State University); red and black (University of Georgia); crimson and white (Indiana University); silver and red (Georgia State University); blue and gold (West Virginia University); gold and white (Georgia Institute of Technology); white and light blue (Pennsylvania State University); orange and white (University of Tennessee); crimson and white (University of Alabama); blue and white (University of Kentucky); and blue and buff (The George Washington University).

