



COMMENCEMENT

TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-SIX

GRADUATE & UNDERGRADUATE

CARPE DIEM

COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

AUGUST 24, 2026

HONORS



Scan the QR code to see a listing of our highest-ranking degree recipients by department and undergraduate candidates with Latin honors.

Undergraduate candidates receiving Latin honors are distinguished as cum laude, magna cum laude, or summa cum laude and will be presented with a gold honor cord to wear during the commencement ceremony.

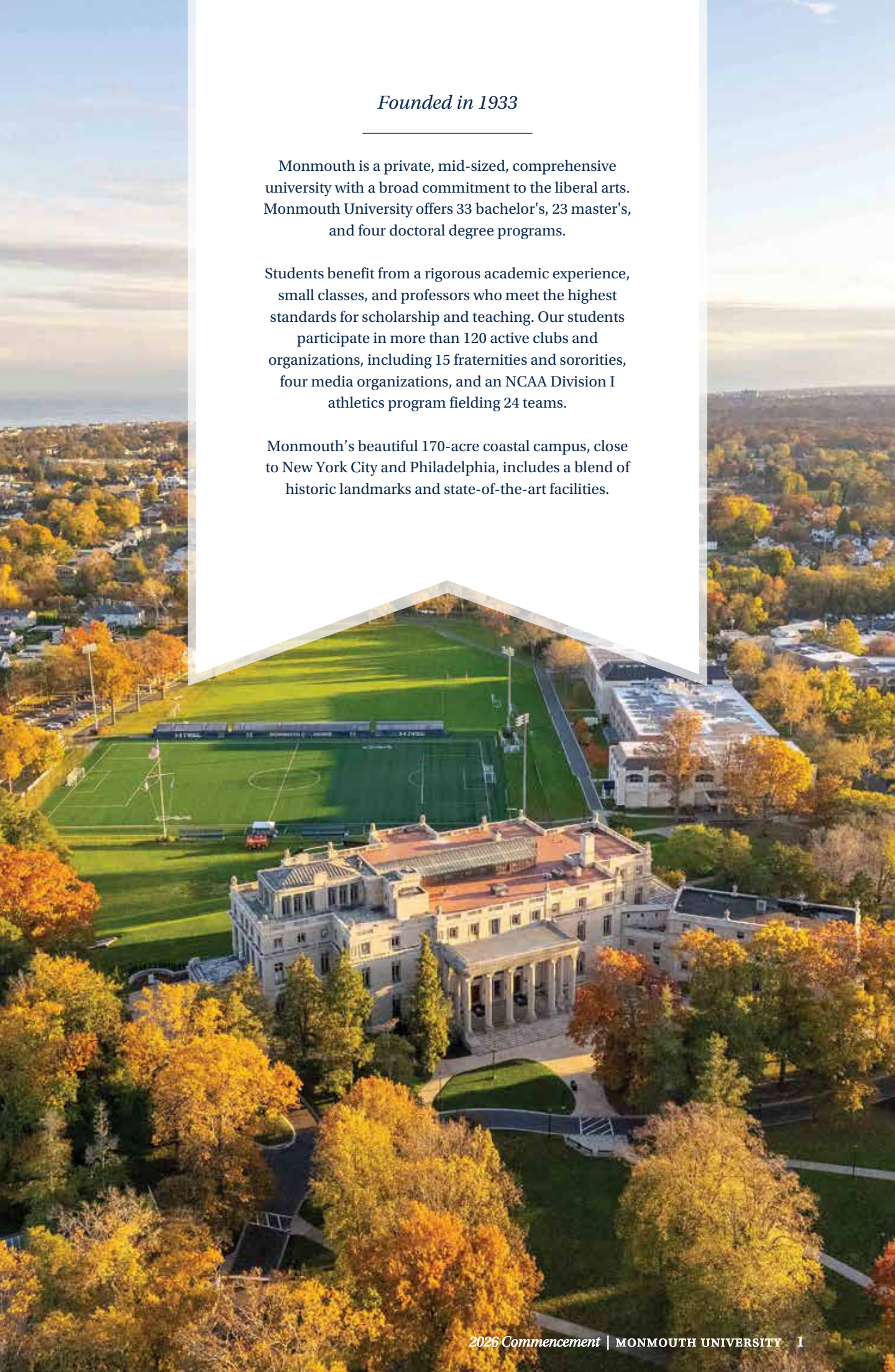
monmouth.edu/commencementhonors

Founded in 1933

Monmouth is a private, mid-sized, comprehensive university with a broad commitment to the liberal arts. Monmouth University offers 33 bachelor's, 23 master's, and four doctoral degree programs.

Students benefit from a rigorous academic experience, small classes, and professors who meet the highest standards for scholarship and teaching. Our students participate in more than 120 active clubs and organizations, including 15 fraternities and sororities, four media organizations, and an NCAA Division I athletics program fielding 24 teams.

Monmouth's beautiful 170-acre coastal campus, close to New York City and Philadelphia, includes a blend of historic landmarks and state-of-the-art facilities.



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Tasha A. Youngblood Brown '97 '03M, *Vice Chair*

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Raymond G. Klose '77	Carol A. Stillwell

TRUSTEES EMERITI

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Alfred L. Ferguson, Esq. '13HN

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Christopher D. Maher

Henry D. Mercer, III '87 '17HN

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Steven J. Pozyski '73

William B. Roberts

Robert B. Sculthorpe '63 '15HN

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION
2026 OFFICERS

Brendan J. Sheehan, *President*

Emma Vinci, *Vice President*

Nate Whitehead, *Director of Finance*

Asia Russell, *Director of University Affairs*

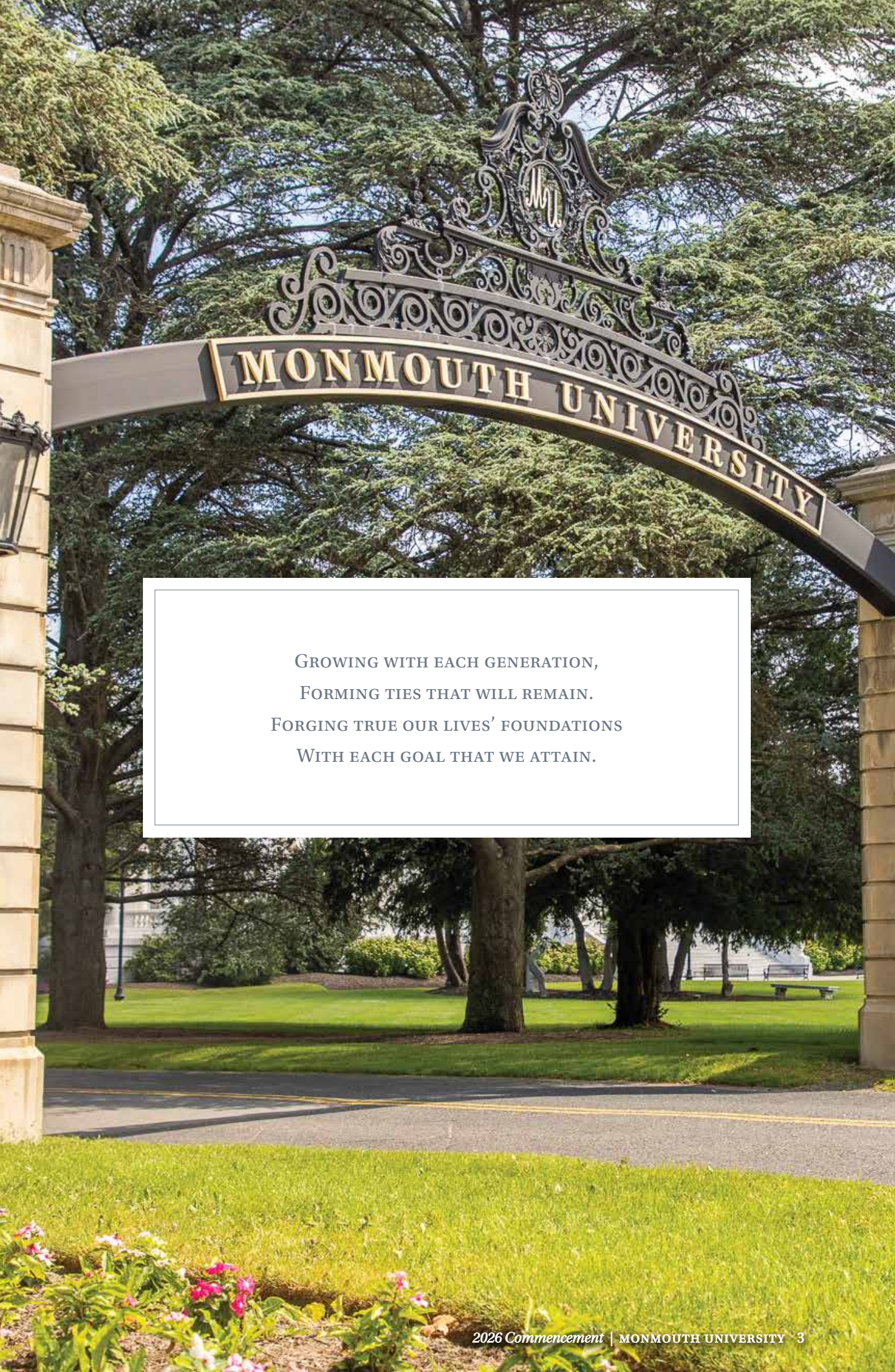
CLASS OF 2026 OFFICERS

Jacqueline Tamburrino, *President*

Samantha Panzella, *Vice President*

Yahira Guevara, *Secretary*

Briana Sokolov, *Treasurer*

A large, ornate metal archway with the words "MONMOUTH UNIVERSITY" in gold lettering on a dark background. The arch is flanked by stone pillars and is set against a backdrop of large, leafy trees. The scene is a sunny day on a university campus.

MONMOUTH UNIVERSITY

GROWING WITH EACH GENERATION,
FORMING TIES THAT WILL REMAIN.
FORGING TRUE OUR LIVES' FOUNDATIONS
WITH EACH GOAL THAT WE ATTAIN.

GRADUATE
&
UNDERGRADUATE
CEREMONY

Monday, August 24, 2026

COMMENCEMENT

ORDER OF PROCESSION

PROCESSIONAL

“Pomp and Circumstance,” Sir Edward Elgar

NATIONAL ANTHEM

PROVOST’S WELCOME

Susan Forquer Gupta, Ph.D.
Associate Provost

GREETINGS FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Stephen E. Gerard '89M, Chair

GREETINGS FROM FACULTY

John Comiskey, Ed.D.
Professor, Dept. of Criminal Justice & Chair, Faculty Council

GREETINGS TO THE GRADUATING CLASS

Matthew Collier, M.B.A.

CONFERRAL OF DEGREES

Patrick F. Leahy, Ed.D.
President

PRESENTATION OF DEGREES IN COURSE

Doctoral Degrees
School of Education
Leon Hess Business School
Wayne D. McMurray School of Humanities and Social Sciences
Marjorie K. Unterberg School of Nursing and Health Studies
School of Science
School of Social Work

PRESIDENT’S REMARKS

Patrick F. Leahy, Ed.D.
President

ALMA MATER

RECESSIONAL

“Trumpet Voluntary,” Henry Purcell

*All commencement participants and guests are requested to remain
in their seats until all of the ceremony participants process out.*

GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE CANDIDATES

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Doctoral Degrees

Erin M. Embon
EdD, Educational Leadership

Katherine Carmen Granja
EdD, Educational Leadership

Mallory Jordan Krakovsky
EdD, Educational Leadership

Efstratios Monafis
EdD, Educational Leadership

Master's Degrees

Lorena N. Adelhoch
MEd, Education

Vanessa Rose Altner
MEd, Education

Francine A. Aquino
MEd, Education

Emily Elizabeth Aschenbach
MEd, Education

Michelle Lynn Ballin
MSEd, Education - Special Education

Tenisha L. Beckom
MEd, Education

Heather Lynn Cascone
MEd, Education

Carmela Angela Dasti
MSEd, Education - Special Education

Robert C. Drobish
MSEd, Education - Special Education

Christopher Alberto Duffett
MEd, Education

Anthony Gaudiello
MEd, Education

Heather Anne Gorney
MEd, Education

Sarah Amelia Gwiazda
MEd, Education

Estefania McKay
MSEd, Education - Principal

Megan Mellaci
MSEd, Education - Principal

Gwendolyn Adeena Mickens
MEd, Education

Kalee R. Mora
MEd, Education

John J. Piccinino
MEd, Education

Leah C. Pilgrim
MEd, Education

Flavia Michelle Reynosa
MEd, Education

Susana Severino
MEd, Education

Sarah Katherine Velazquez
MEd, Education

Kayla Lynn Williams-Straub
MEd, Education

LEON HESS BUSINESS SCHOOL

Master's Degrees

Matthew John Collier
MBA, Business Administration

Isabella R. Concurso
MBA, Business Administration

Samara Cruz
MBA, Business Administration

Sean Patrick Donegan
MBA, Business Administration

Kevin Michael Fedoruk
MBA, Business Administration

Leo Nolan Fricker
MBA, Business Administration

Jeffrey Todd Giaquinto
MBA, Business Administration

Julia Karen Gordon
MBA, Business Administration

Jack Stanley Madden
MBA, Business Administration

Christian Joseph Milone
MBA, Business Administration

Matthew Charles Przywara
MBA, Business Administration

Tiyana Rishika Randeniya
MBA, Business Administration

Andrew Joseph Schmid
MBA, Business Administration

Ethan D. Tansey
MBA, Business Administration

Nicholas Jeffrey Teets
MBA, Business Administration

Julianna Jolie Tornabene
MBA, Business Administration

Victoria K. Tritto
MBA, Business Administration

Aidan Charles Watson
MBA, Business Administration

Baccalaureate Degrees

Emily Alyse Atheras
BS, Business Administration

Dana Michelle Bagala
BS, Business Administration

Rose Elizabeth Cardinuto
BS, Business Administration

Emre Cetintas
BS, Business Administration

Dayana Garcia-Hernandez
BS, Business Administration

Herbert Andrew Hernandez
BS, Business Administration

Julia Rose Hunt
BS, Business Administration

Cailynn Nicole Jacquez
BS, Business Administration

Candide Rosaline Kwedjeu Tsayo
BS, Business Administration

Brooke Lacey
BS, Business Administration

Jack Grant Lavere
BS, Business Administration

Gianna Maria Maresca
BS, Business Administration

Pierre Anel Michel Jr.
BS, Business Administration

Liam Thomas Mulvey
BS, Business Administration

Juliette Victoria Paradise
BS, Business Administration

Joshua Dylan Ripp
BS, Business Administration

Bryce Barksdale Rooks
BS, Business Administration

Mason Usher Rowe
BS, Business Administration

Arseniy Shafran
BS, Business Administration

Jordan Taylor
BS, Business Administration

Michael Liam Terry
BS, Business Administration

Jason Christopher Wallack
BS, Business Administration

Miranda Rose Walsh
BS, Business Administration

Isabella Rose Yager
BS, Business Administration

Brayden Allen Yordy
BS, Business Administration

WAYNE D. McMURRAY
SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Master's Degrees

Daniel Ryan Bensch
MA, Criminal Justice

Sarah Rose Bilotta
MA, Criminal Justice

Yonzay T. Chambers
MS, Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Grace Madelyn Curtin
MA, Communication

Matthew Nicol Del Guercio
MA, Anthropology

Matthew R. Fisch
MA, Anthropology

Amanda Rose Hayes
MA, Communication

Caroline E. Hurtt
MA, Communication

Cameron G. Kinsella
MA, Communication

Alyssa Ann McCall
MA, Criminal Justice

Ronnie Meador
MA, Anthropology

Alexandra Paris Mytnick
MA, Anthropology

Samuel I. Schwartz
MA, Anthropology

Binna Marie Scipilliti
MS, Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Colleen Ritter Vermeulen
MS, Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Baccalaureate Degrees

Carley Morgan Belli
BA, Criminal Justice

La'Jean Antonio Amaud Berry
BS, Homeland Security

Aidan Thomas Bretschneider
BA, Communication

Drew Thomas Burnett
BA, English

Delainey Grace Frank
BA, Political Science

Makhi T. Green
BFA, Fine Arts

Jenna Rachel Grieco
BS, Homeland Security

Patrick Francis Healy
BA, Music

Thomas Joseph Kent
BA, Communication

Russel John Mancino
BFA, Fine Arts

Connor James Mohr
BA, History

Charlie Matthew Pallitto
BA, Communication

William James Peterpaul
BS, Homeland Security

Tiago M. Ribeiro
BA, Political Science

Emmett Romilio
BFA, Fine Arts

Agata Sandra Rychter
BA, Criminal Justice

Mairead Ann Spellacy
BA, Communication

Payton Christie Sugar
BA, Criminal Justice

Amy Lynn Tremer
BFA, Fine Arts

Aidan Forbes Tucker
BA, History

Michael Wade
BA, Communication

Oliwia Zajkowska
BA, Psychology

MARJORIE K. UNTERBERG
SCHOOL OF NURSING AND
HEALTH STUDIES

Master's Degree

Denise Ann-Marie Wilder
MSN, Nursing

Baccalaureate Degrees

Katie Akkari
BS, Health Studies

Nayreen Khalid Amir
BS, Health Studies

Gabriella Amelia Collins
BS, Health Studies

Sage Marin Collins
BS, Health Studies

Anna Carolina Dos Santos
BS, Health Studies

Emily Nicole Hamilton
BS, Health Studies

Taye Isaiah Kennedy
BS, Health Studies

Justina LaCorte
BS, Health Promotion

Isabella Mary Murray
BS, Health Studies

Emma Grace Negrón
BS, Health Studies

Patrick John Osiecki
BS, Health Promotion

Degree Legend

BA: Bachelor of Arts

BFA: Bachelor of Fine Arts

BS: Bachelor of Science

EdD: Doctor of Education

MA: Master of Arts

MBA: Master of Business Administration

MEd: Master of Education

MS: Master of Science

MSN: Master of Science in Nursing

MSEd: Master of Science in Education

MSW: Master of Social Work

Jean Carlo Rosas
BS, Health Studies

Lauren Elizabeth Soutar
BS, Health Studies

Cristopher Vasquez
BS, Health Studies

SCHOOL OF SCIENCE

Baccalaureate Degrees

Jullie-Allisan de Faria
BS, Biology

Faith Randi-Lee Fletcher
BS, Biology

Angelina Theresa Garcia
BS, Biology

Tyshaunine L. Harmon
BS, Medical Laboratory Science

Christopher Matthew Salerno
BS, Medical Laboratory Science

Ava Marie Santaniello
BS, Biology

Jessica Nicole Sundberg
BS, Biology

Jessica Erin Tremel
BS, Biology

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Master's Degree

Morgan Lynne Kephart
MSW, Social Work



A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members of the Class of 2026:

To the Class of 2026: congratulations. No matter what your path was to this moment — and every journey is different — you made it. On this day, in this place, you hold a Monmouth University degree. You earned it, and we couldn't be prouder.

And to the families, friends, and loved ones who share in this day: you helped make it possible. Whether you supported these graduates from across the country or from the next seat over, your presence here means everything. This accomplishment belongs to you as well. Congratulations!

You graduate from a university that is stronger than the one you entered. During your four years, Monmouth earned its highest-ever national ranking, achieved Carnegie Research University status, and this spring, was designated a National University by U.S. News & World Report — a milestone that has been years in the making. You were here for all of it. That progress is part of your story, and you are part of ours.

Now the question belongs to you. You leave here with more than a credential — you leave with new abilities: to think, to analyze, to engage a complicated world with integrity and purpose. The world needs exactly that. Our challenges are real and urgent, and we need educated, motivated people ready to meet them. I hope you will.

But I also hope you will not feel the weight of that responsibility as a burden. My deepest wish for each of you is that you find fulfillment — the kind that is yours alone. And when you do, I hope you look back on this place as somewhere that helped you find it.

On behalf of everyone at Monmouth University: congratulations, Class of 2026. You will always be welcome here.

Sincerely,



Dr. Patrick F. Leahy
President

DISTINGUISHED TEACHER AWARD 2026 RECIPIENT

MELISSA A. BRZYCKI, PH.D.

Associate Professor, History and Anthropology

Dear Graduating Class of 2026,

Congratulations on finishing your degree, Class of 2026! You should be proud of yourself. Take the time to celebrate this accomplishment with your loved ones.

I hope that you have learned many things while at Monmouth: the content and skills taught in your classes; the applications of knowledge in your research projects, service learning, or internships; and the brain-fortifying pleasure of wrangling difficult and complex knowledge and making it your own.

I also hope that you learned other, more abstract lessons. I hope that you have learned that you are capable of hard things. You have done hard things while you have been here, and you have succeeded, and you can do that again.

I hope that your time here has taught you to understand the world and recognize its difficult truths. I hope that you can recognize the inequalities and cruelties of this world, take action to make them better in your own way, and integrate that work into a joyful and satisfying life.

I hope you have gained appreciation for the importance of community and relationships of care. I hope that you have created meaningful and lasting bonds that you will carry forward after graduation, and that you will also continue to create strong relationships and build community for the rest of your life.

I also hope you will come back and visit your old professors once in a while. We would love to see you.

Congratulations!

Melissa A. Brzycki, Ph.D., is an associate professor in the Department of History and Anthropology at Monmouth University. She earned her bachelor's degree in political science at UNC Chapel Hill and her Ph.D. in modern Chinese history at UC Santa Cruz. She researches the thinking, institution-building, and daily practices by which childhood was reformulated and shaped in the context of socialist nation-building in China from 1949-1966 and how families and children responded to those initiatives. Her work has been funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the American Association of University Women (AAUW).

Brzycki regularly uses role-playing in the classroom, including games from the Reacting Consortium. She is currently creating a game on the August 1966 meeting of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party to determine the direction of the Cultural Revolution.



ACADEMIC REGALIA

The history of academic dress reaches far back into the earliest days of the oldest universities. A statute of 1321 required that all “Doctors, Licentiates, and Bachelors” of the University of Coimbra wear gowns. In England, in the second half of the 14th century, the statutes of certain colleges prescribed the wearing of a long gown. In the 16th and 17th centuries in Europe, the wearing of a robe often signified a degree candidate’s political or religious affiliation; in the northern universities and those of the British Isles, the robes signified that tuition and boarding fees of the wearer had been paid and also entitled them to special immunities in civil law, as well as providing them warmth at lectures and chapel.

When American colleges and universities desired to adopt some suitable system of academic apparel, a conference held at Columbia University in 1895, made up of representatives from various institutions, drew up a “By-Law, Regulation, or Statute” for the establishment of a suitable code of academic dress for colleges and universities in the United States. This code, with modifications made in 1959 by the Committee on Academic Costumes and Ceremonies of the American Council on Education, is still in force; the costumes and colors, trimmings, and patterns you will see are traditional, and interpret both the degree and field of learning. The bachelor’s gown, designed to be worn closed, has pointed sleeves; the master’s gown, which may be worn open or closed, has an oblong sleeve open at the wrist that hangs down in the traditional manner. The rear part of its oblong shape is square cut, and the front part has the arc cut away. The doctoral gown has bell-shaped sleeves. It may be worn open or closed.

Black is the recommended color for all academic gowns. Bachelor’s and master’s gowns are untrimmed. Doctoral gowns are faced with black velvet, with three bars across the sleeves; the color of the velvet may also be that which is distinctive to the degree, agreeing with that of the edging of the hood. In the 1960s, many American land-grant universities adopted the British and the Scottish tradition of using the official school color(s) for the robes of their doctoral recipients—for instance, Yale: sky blue; Harvard: crimson; University of Pennsylvania: scarlet and blue; Columbia: slate gray; Rutgers: scarlet and black.

The hoods, differing in length for the three degrees—bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral—are lined with the official colors of the university or college conferring the degree, usually with one color forming a chevron pattern over the other. Hoods are edged and bound with velvet or the color appropriate for the degree. You will see in our procession many hoods edged with dark blue, representing doctor of philosophy.

Mortarboards are the approved headgear. The tassel, worn on the left side of the cap, may be gold if the holder has a doctoral degree.



MONMOUTH UNIVERSITY ALMA MATER

Music by: Beethoven | Lyrics by: Louis P. Nappen '90, '92

Moderato

1. Sym - bol of our skills and vir - tues her - ald of our
2. Gro-wing with each ge - ne - ra - tion, for- ming ties that

di - gni - ty; with these prai - ses we sa - lute you
will re - main. For - ging true our lives foun - da - tions

Mon-mouth U - ni - ver - si - ty Soar - ing from the
with each goal that we at - tain.

Jer - sey shore u - pon the wind, our wings un-furld.

High a - bove the o - cean's roar, the Blue Hawks rise to meet the world.

STAY CONNECTED



Congratulations on becoming the newest members of our alumni family—a vibrant network that boasts over 60,000 Hawks in 50 states. Wherever your journey takes you next, we hope you will stay connected with your campus community. Update your alumni contact at monmouth.edu/stayconnected to receive the monthly alumni e-newsletter, invitations to alumni events and networking gatherings, and alumni discounts, and save the date for your first Homecoming Alumni Tailgate on Oct. 3!

We can't wait to welcome you back home!





WEST LONG BRANCH, NEW JERSEY 07764-1898