



2025

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# COMMENCEMENT

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THURSDAY THE EIGHTEENTH OF DECEMBER



Texas Wesleyan  
UNIVERSITY



# COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

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## PROCESSIONAL

NATIONAL ANTHEM..... Texas Wesleyan Wind Ensemble and Ram Band  
Sung by Patricio Izaguirre, Junior

## ALMA MATER - WORDS BY J.C. DENNEY

*Hail to thee dear Texas Wesleyan, from the heart I give my praise.  
In the paths of high endeavor, fame and fortune crown your days.  
Streaming forth a line of splendor, sons and daughters all declare,  
Living testimony render, to the worthy name you bear.*

INVOCATION ..... Dr. Stephanie Sloan  
*University Chaplain and Director of Spiritual Life*

INTRODUCTIONS ..... The Honorable Glenn Lewis '81  
*Chairman of the Board*  
  
Dr. Emily Messer  
*President*

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS ..... Mark Ma '04  
*CEO and founder of Biotech Innovations*

EARL BROWN DISTINGUISHED FACULTY AWARD .. Dr. Brenda Taylor Matthews  
*Professor of History*

CONFERRING OF ACADEMIC DEGREES ..... Dr. Emily Messer  
  
Dr. Hector Quintanilla  
*Provost & Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs,  
Interim Dean, School of Health Professions*

AWARDING OF ACADEMIC DEGREES ..... Dr. Ricardo Rodriguez  
*Dean, School of Arts and Sciences*  
  
Dr. Sameer Vaidya  
*Dean, School of Business Administration  
and Professional Programs*  
  
Dr. Carlos Martinez  
*Dean, School of Education*  
  
Dr. Misti Sparks  
*Professor and Director of Graduate Programs in Counseling*

WELCOME FROM ALUMNI ..... Vernon Wright '93  
*President of the Alumni Association*

LITANY AND BENEDICTION..... Dr. Stephanie Sloan

## RECESSIONAL



**MARK MA**  
THE CEO AND FOUNDER OF BIOTECH INNOVATIONS

Mark Ma is the CEO and founder of Biotech Innovations, one of the very few fully integrated agricultural biological manufacturing companies in the United States. His journey began as a student, developing biological products out of his dorm room in O C Hall. What started as a small idea soon grew into a mission to provide sustainable solutions for American agriculture.

After graduating in 2004, Mark rented his first office near 635 and Forest Lane in Dallas and invested everything into building the company. By the third month, he faced a challenge familiar to many entrepreneurs: not enough money to pay the next month's rent. A newly signed dealer placed his first order that provided just enough support to keep the business alive. That moment shaped Mark's belief that relationships, trust and resilience are the foundation of long-term success.

Two decades later, Biotech Innovations has grown into a national leader in agricultural biologicals. Its technologies are used on more than 2 million acres of farmland across the United States every year, helping growers improve plant health, reduce input costs and restore soil function. The company has established partnerships with Fortune 100 companies and collaborates with leading research institutions.

Under Mark's leadership, Biotech Innovations is one of only three U.S. manufacturers in the capable of developing, producing and distributing biological inputs at full scale. The company is known for its investments in soil microbiome research, proprietary biological technologies and scientific breakthroughs. Among its notable discoveries is the first known fungus with natural fungicidal activity, opening a new frontier in biological crop protection.

Mark has served on the Texas Wesleyan University Board of Trustees for more than 10 years, reflects his commitment to education and mentorship. He often shares his experiences with students and young entrepreneurs navigating their early steps in business and leadership.

From a dorm room startup to a nationally recognized manufacturer, Mark's story underscores persistence, integrity and long-term commitment. His work continues to inspire young people to pursue their ideas boldly, stay grounded in integrity, keep influencing the future of sustainable agriculture and inspiring innovators to pursue ideas with resilience and purpose.

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## ORDER OF THE PROCESSIONAL

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Cross Bearer

Bible Bearer

Academic Marshals

December 2025 Graduating Class

Faculty Marshal

Faculty

Grand Marshal

Platform Party

Provost

President

## ACADEMIC REGALIA AND SYMBOLS

American academic regalia originated at European medieval universities, particularly Oxford University, about seven centuries ago. At that time, the teachers were clergymen, the students were studying to become clerics, and the cassock was their usual costume. The tradition has continued through the ages at colleges and universities in the wearing of the academic gown, hood and cap.

The cap, or mortarboard, is the same for all degrees with the exception of the tassel, which denotes the academic area of the degree. The tassel is worn on the right side of the cap until the bachelor's degree is conferred, at which time it is switched to the left side.

The gown is usually black. Some institutions have designated other colors to be worn by their doctoral graduates. The doctor's gown is faced with velvet and has three velvet bands on each sleeve. These distinguishing marks may be either black or in the appropriate color of the academic degree earned. The master's gown has no ornamentation, is always black and is distinguished by the shape and length of the sleeves. The sleeves are long and shaped with a square-cut corner at the back and an arc-cut from the front. The gown for the baccalaureate graduate has long pointed sleeves.

The most colorful and significant item of the academic regalia is the hood. The length indicates the degree; the color of the border denotes the academic area of the degree; the colors of the hood lining identify the college or university, which granted the degree. The doctor's hood is four feet long with a five-inch border. The master's hood is three and one-half feet long with a three-inch border and a long, large pocket at the bottom. The bachelor's hood is three-feet long with a two-inch border.

The academic colors most frequently associated with the Texas Wesleyan University academic community are:

Arts and Letters.....	White	Mass Communication.....	Crimson
Business.....	Light Brown	Music.....	Pink
Counseling.....	White	Nursing.....	Apricot
Criminal Justice.....	Purple	Paralegal Studies.....	Purple
Education.....	Light Blue	Science.....	Golden Yellow
Exercise Science.....	Sage Green	Sociology.....	Citron
History.....	White	Theatre.....	Brown
Language.....	White	Theology.....	Scarlet
Library Science.....	Lemon		

The green and blue tassels identify members of the Alpha Chi National Honor Society. These graduates are at or near the top two percent of their class.

The gold cord symbolizes membership in an honor society. The purple and teal tassels identify members of Kappa Delta Pi, an international honor society in education.

The mace is a common symbol of the authority and power of a corporate body. Its use as such originated in medieval times in legislative bodies and university faculties. It is carried by the presiding officer of the Faculty Assembly.

The presidential medallion is a symbol of the Office of the President of a chartered institution. It bears the seal of the college and is placed around the neck of the president at investiture to represent the yoke of responsibility for the welfare of the institution.

## A TEXAS-SIZED HISTORY

Originally called Polytechnic College — which literally means "many arts and sciences" — the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, founded Texas Wesleyan University in 1890. The school held its first classes in September 1891, with 111 students.

In 1902, H.A. Boaz assumed the presidency and led the university's first period of substantive growth. During his tenure, new residence halls, a fine arts conservatory, a science hall and a gym were built. Enrollment increased each year at the new university, which was located a few miles from the growing city of Fort Worth.

When Dallas was selected by the church leaders as the site for Southern Methodist University, the Polytechnic campus was designated the Woman's College for Southern Methodism, eventually becoming Texas Woman's College in 1914.

During the 1920s, the tradition of robing, which commemorates the relationship between faculty and students through a ceremonial vesting of cap and gown, became a university tradition. The tradition remains to this day. And, it is an example of Texas Wesleyan's dedication to a small, personal educational atmosphere.

The college was renamed Texas Wesleyan College in 1935, and has remained a co-educational liberal arts institution with an increasingly



comprehensive academic and student life program. Law Sone became the President of Texas Wesleyan in 1935, which kicked off a 33-year period of growth and expansion.

Under Sone, athletics thrived, with dominant teams in golf and basketball; new facilities were built on campus, including a new library and residence halls; and new academic programs in business and education became points of pride for the university.

In addition to strong undergraduate programs, the university added graduate programs in education in the 1970s and in nurse anesthesia in the 1980s. Recognizing the growth in programs, Trustees changed the name of the institution to Texas Wesleyan University, effective in January 1989. The Graduate Programs of Nurse Anesthesia has grown into the largest in the nation, delivering courses to students throughout the United States.

President Dr. Emily Messer became the 21st president of Texas Wesleyan in July 2023. She has an extensive background in higher education, from helping colleges break historic enrollment numbers and securing funding for new programming and expansions of colleges, to putting a focus on the importance of student life. She has goals to continue making the university a higher education leader in the community.

## CANDIDATES FOR DOCTORAL DEGREES

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### SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

#### DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Guadalupe Garcia\*

*Teacher Perceptions of Technology Integration in Elementary Classrooms*

Saranya Areeyat Graf

*Integrating Dual Credit Programs: Leadership, Policy and Equity in Texas ISD-College Partnerships*

Loni Montrai Lawson-Abrón

*A Descriptive Investigation of Title 1 and Student Achievement*

Janice Marie Thomas

*Examining the Perspectives and Experiences of African American Male Educators and the Lack of Representation in the K-12 Public School System.*

### SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS

#### DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

JoAngeli Zertuche Kasper

*Exploring the Impact of Single Session Solution Focused Narrative Therapy (SFNT) on Christian Parents' Acceptance of their LGBTQ+ Children: A Mixed Methods Study*

## CANDIDATES FOR MASTER'S DEGREES

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### SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION AND PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS

#### MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Alexandria Rayne Alvarez\*

Nina A. Amoah

Brutus Chad Austin

Janay Nicole Barnes\*

Michael Wayne Bowles

Giovanna Anahi Calvillo

Dysleemar Carrillo-Merced\*

Kennedy Alicea Cedillo

Alondra Honstein Chavez

Kelly Lauren Clark\*

Andres Dondiego Lopez

La'Zoria M. Epps

Quentin Fankhouser

Michael Chase Franklin

Osmond Eghosa Izeke\*

Kamryn Elise Johnston

Asif Farasat Khan

Matt Kohn

Venkateshwar Rao Vaishnavi Lakkakula

Alexa Rhea Minton

Annetta Obichi Oleru

Utpreksha Patel\*

Deja Posey

Yamam Mahdi Bushra Saheb

Savanna Rae Smith\*

Victoria Faith Lai Smith

Michael Joshua Thomas

Jana Washington

Taaj D'Hamir Woolen

### SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

#### MASTER OF EDUCATION

Jasmine Shanai Barnes

Samantha A. Barragan\*

Latoya Danielle Blount\*

Jay Adle Brown\*

Kip Anthony Edwards II\*

Paula Maria Frade\*

Lakendra Shonte Huntley\*

Saudiah Kinney\*

Sandra Marie Lopez

Emily Anne McDermott\*

Devin Lee Monroe

Anna Barrett Moore

Sheyla Rivera

Jorge Mario Rodriguez

Hannah Scott\*

Marisol Serrano

Valerie Ann Sierra

Melanie Bost Spark

Diana Thomas

Shafaria M. Titus

### SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS

#### MASTER OF ARTS IN PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING

Nicolas David Berger\*

Kasey Rene' Combs

Allyse Graben

Malisa Manuel

Eliza L. Sun

Shadonna M. Wallace\*

## CANDIDATES FOR MASTER'S DEGREES (CONT.)

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### MASTER OF SCIENCE IN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY

Riley Braack  
Jasmine Natalie Garcia  
Sara Hall  
TaNiya Denise Jessie

Samuel Lazarte  
Lorna Alicia Mendez- Rocha  
Madelyne Mai Nguyen  
Cailee Michelle O'Connell

Ashleigh Emery O'Neal  
Shelby Nicole Spaulding  
Brooke Elizabeth Thatcher  
Jeanette Vasquez\*

## SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

### BACHELOR OF ARTS

Ariel Lee Armstrong  
Alexandra Rachel Bennett

Crystal Michelle Rodriguez-Solito  
Ruth Elizabeth Urbina

Grace Wood

### BACHELOR OF FINE ARTS

Abigaile Nicole Webb

### BACHELOR OF MUSIC

Amanda Tulloch

### BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

Sheyla Jasmin Aguilar Castro  
Estrella Almazan Espinosa  
Angeles Alvarado  
Jonathan Arzuaga-Portugues  
Makayla Elizabeth Banks  
Alexis Starr Bernal\*  
Brooke Rashell Boyd  
Kayley Elizabeth Brady-Estes  
Cory Dylan Buchanan  
Tina Trang Bui  
Jennifer J. Castanon  
Emily Michelle Corona  
Shirley Esperanza Delgado  
Mitchell Erin Dunning  
Gianna Marcela Farias  
Nevaeh Monae Finley  
Starashia Shadett Fletcher-Shoels  
Ryan J. Flores  
Jasmine Veoria Funchess  
Rody Garcia Medina  
Bryan F. Godinez  
Julian Hamilton Harvey

Abigail Jacobo Hernandez  
Bailey Colleen Horton  
Jameka Jones  
Jessica Kristine Kern  
Thomas Andrew Kerr  
Allyson Brooke Espinosa Kolba  
Maliah LaCour  
Alissa Yasmine Laguna  
Alexandria Nicole Lee  
Alondra Martinez  
Julie Anna McCray  
Heather Nicole Moore  
Maria Guadalupe Morales  
Connor Lane Morris  
EmmaLeigh Therese Nelson  
Vu Bao Chau Nguyen  
Mary Wanjiru Njoroge  
Jaelin Larae Ornelas  
Emmanuel Oviosa  
Norell Lavon Pettus  
Khanh Ngan Phan  
Kamryn Latrece Ransome

Emily Jill Reeves  
Colton M. Rhine\*  
Ashley Nicole Rieco  
Lori Yates Roberts  
Sarah E. Rodriguez\*  
Jack Zachary Rogers\*  
Olivia Li-Yu Roundtree  
Carla Lilianna Salazar  
Nolan K. Sims  
Trey Sinegal  
Melanie Solis  
Kaycie Akiko Kehau Tanimoto  
Joseph Leon Thomas  
Gabriel Eduardo Torres Arevalo  
Sofia Tovar  
Khalil Turner  
Kaitlyn B. Valaitis  
Sara Lila Villatoro  
Macaylla Mattox Wiles  
Earnest Lee Williams Jr.  
Bryan Austin Wofford

## CANDIDATES FOR BACCALAUREATE DEGREES (CONT.)

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### SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION AND PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS

#### BACHELOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Jaimini Arunkumar Barot  
Brandon Keith Bellows  
Breyden Scott Blackwell  
Joshua Edward Bostick\*  
Caleb J. Calderon  
Rocendo Nicolas Calzada  
Ashalli Jemais Cannon  
Dominic Jimenez Chavez  
Maressa Danelle Chavez  
Jayson Lynn Christian  
Bailey Lynn Clark  
Wilson Manuel Crispin  
Ediel David Cruz\*  
Tiffany Curry  
Nick Benibo David-West\*  
Armando Jose De Ochoa  
Benjamin Jesus Domenzain  
Krystopher Doyle  
Jonathan Fellers  
Cole Michael Francis

Joyce Gamuchirai Gatsi  
Zizhen Han  
Jose Joel Hernandez  
Landry Lee Hooks  
Claire Marie Key  
Tiffany Michelle Key  
Rijan Khadka  
Emily Lewis  
Jonathan Abdias Lopez  
Estrella Lucero  
Britney Martinez  
Diego Martinez  
Gilberto Martinez  
Alana Maree McCormick  
Tahir Meulens  
Ashton Kade Mitchell-Johnson  
Gabriela Alejandra Morales  
Anaïs C. Moreno  
Ryan Murphy  
Xithlaly Narvaez

Diondra Lachelle Newton  
Lorrain Magret Nyamwela  
Melanie Victoria Palomo  
Jennifer Quyen Pham  
Brandon Juventino Portillo Chavez  
Ricardo Ramirez  
Carson Kyle Rodgers  
Catherine Rodriguez  
Peter Andrew Ruiz  
Marco Salamanca de Arcos  
Josue Omar Sanchez  
Shellby Celeste Sanders  
Michael John Shepa  
Eric Thornton Steele  
Charles Taylor  
Matteo Todorovic  
Daniel Arturo Vargas  
Ka’Ryan Janai Williams  
Caleb Matthew Yauger  
Rachel Ann Zimmer

### SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

#### BACHELOR OF ARTS

Adriana Escobedo  
Laisha Gaytan

Natalie Rose Ortiz  
Ana Regina Perez

Samantha Jeanette Ramirez  
Valeria Zendejas

#### BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

Raneen Al Manasri  
Saori Ailen Arreola  
Makayla Boone  
Lexie Sheree Boyd

Ryan Andrew Cuajunco  
Hope Mackenzie Miller  
Lauran Isabella Richards  
Aidan Joaquin Salazar

Christian Sandoval Macias  
Mikayla Shae Trevino  
Esmeralda Valdez



## THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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The Honorable Glenn Lewis '81, Fort Worth  
*Chairman of the Board*

Vickie Stevens '80, Fort Worth  
*Vice Chairman of the Board*

Dr. Greg Philips '70, Fort Worth  
*Secretary of the Board*

Tim Carter, Fort Worth  
*Immediate Past Chair*

Larry Anfin, Fort Worth

Richard Barajas '96, Fort Worth

The Honorable Roy C. Brooks, HON '15, Fort Worth

Dr. Tim Bruster, Fort Worth

Karen Burchfield '84, Southlake

Fernando Costa, Fort Worth

Susan Coultas '83, Burleson

Karen Cramer, Granbury

The Honorable Kay Granger '65, HON '92, Fort Worth

Tompie Hall '74, Colleyville

Marsha Hilcher '69, Fort Worth

Aslam Khan, Southlake

Thomas Locke, Georgetown

Nisha Lunia '93, Dallas

Susan Lyons '84, Colleyville

Dr. Louella Baker Martin, HON '03, Fort Worth

Councilwoman Jeanette Martinez '12, Fort Worth

Rick McWhorter '84, Fort Worth

Rosa Navejar, Fort Worth

Councilman Chris Nettles, Fort Worth

Terry O'Halloran '78, Plano

David Parker, Fort Worth

Dr. Kimberly Persley '89, Dallas

Richard Roby III, North Richland Hills

Ginny Tighe, Colleyville

U.S. Congressman Marc Veasey '95, Fort Worth

Max Wayman '74, Fort Worth

The Honorable Glen Whitley, Hurst

Barbara Williams, Fort Worth

## CHAIRMAN'S COUNCIL

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Gary Cumbie, Fort Worth

Kenneth Jones, Jr., Fort Worth

John Maddux '59, Fort Worth

Anne Street '78, Graham

## TRUSTEE EMERITUS

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John Maddux '59, Fort Worth

Norma Roby, North Richland Hills

Dr. Lamar Smith '50, HON '65, Fort Worth

Claudia Stepp '72, Fort Worth

## PRINCIPAL ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS

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Dr. Emily Messer  
*President*

Dr. Hector Quintanilla  
*Provost & Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs*  
*Interim Dean, School of Health Professions*

Michele Boillotat  
*Vice President of Advancement*

Megan Cooley  
*General Counsel*

Ricky Dotson  
*Athletic Director*

Lauren Findley  
*Vice President of Enrollment Management*

Donna Nance  
*Vice President of Finance and Administration*

Dr. Gary Stout  
*Vice President of Student Affairs & Dean of Students*

Dr. Carlos Martinez  
*Dean, School of Education*

Dr. Ricardo Rodriguez  
*Dean, School of Arts and Sciences*

Dr. Sameer Vaidya  
*Dean, School of Business Administration and Professional Programs*

## LITANY - "PREPARING FOR THE LIGHT"

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Leader: O, God, we who have waited so long in the darkness seek the light of your coming.

People: Send the light of your advent to shatter our darkness and to scatter the shadows that surround us.

Leader: When we are slow to watch for your coming, when we are slow to wait for your wisdom, when we are slow to learn the wonders you would teach us ...

People: Send the light of your advent to make us watchful and wise.

Leader: Enlighten those who teach, that teaching give way to knowledge, and knowledge bring forth truth.

People: Send the light of your advent to make us truthful and strong.

Leader: Enlighten those who learn, that learning give way to insight and insight give birth to joy and wonder.

People: Send the light of your advent to make us joyful and glad.

Leader: Grant each of us the discipline of the teacher and the imagination of the student, that we may walk in ways renewed by the spirit of learning.

People: Send the light of your advent to make us creative and hopeful.

Leader: May our learning move us to caring; our caring move us to action; our action move us to be strong witnesses to your presence in our world.

People: Send the light of your advent to make us caring and brave.

All: And now, O God, we wait with still hearts and open minds for love, joy and peace to be born among us again. Come to us, Emmanuel!

# WELCOME

## TO THE TEXAS WESLEYAN ALUMNI ASSOCIATION!

You are a vital part of the Texas Wesleyan community.  
Here's how you can stay involved as a TXWES alumni.

### ATTEND EVENTS WITH CLASSMATES

There's always something going on at Texas Wesleyan. Check out our monthly e-newsletter, The Ram's Horn, to find out about events like the Wesleyan Wine Walk, Alumni Reunion and Homecoming.

### EXPAND YOUR NETWORK

Staying active as an alumni provides opportunities for career networking, meeting new people and gaining skills and experience as a volunteer. Watch for ways to give back – and grow in return.

### KEEP IN TOUCH

Change of address? Different email? New job? Email us at [alumni@txwes.edu](mailto:alumni@txwes.edu) so we can keep you connected.

### FOLLOW US

Facebook: Texas Wesleyan University Alumni  
Instagram: @txwesalumni





*A Methodist Institution Since 1890*

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