

S O U T H E R N

A D V E N T I S T

U N I V E R S I T Y

COMMENCEMENT EVENTS

AUGUST 21, 2026



ILES PHYSICAL EDUCATION CENTER
COLLEGEDALE, TENNESSEE



Power for Mind & Soul

P R E S I D E N T ' S M E S S A G E T O G R A D U A T E S



Dear Graduates,

Today we celebrate a significant milestone in the lives of our graduates and for Southern Adventist University. Graduation is a moment of gratitude—gratitude for God’s blessings, for the dedication and perseverance of each graduate, and for the family members, friends, faculty, and staff who have encouraged and supported each one along the way.

Graduates, this day marks both a meaningful conclusion and a hopeful beginning. As you receive your degrees, I rejoice with you in all that God has helped you accomplish, and I look forward with confidence to the opportunities He has prepared for your future. The promise of Proverbs 3:5-6 is a beautiful reminder for your journey: “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.”

At Southern, our mission is to transform lives for eternity. It is our prayer that each graduate will continue to reflect excellence, faith, service, and wholeness in every calling and opportunity God provides.

Congratulations to the Class of 2026. May God bless you abundantly as you take this next step in your journey.

Sincerely,



Ken Shaw, EdD
President

S E R V I C E S O N T H E W E B



Commencement services can be viewed live online by visiting southern.edu/streaming.

Please silence all electronic devices during programs.

Please do not use airhorns or other noisemakers as they can be harmful and painful to those of our guests with hearing devices.

COMMENCEMENT

Friday, August 21, 2026, 10 a.m.



Processional.....	<i>Pomp and Circumstance March No. 1</i>	Sir Edward Elgar
Invocation.....		Jannysse Gray, <i>DNP graduate</i>
Welcome		Mikah Bradley, <i>MSW graduate</i>
Introduction of Speaker.....		Pablo Bentancurt Ledesma, <i>MMin graduate</i>
Commencement Address.....	“Before You Leave (or What Worries Me)”	Greg King, PhD <i>Dean, School of Religion</i>
Conferring of Degrees		Ken Shaw, EdD <i>President</i>
Presentation of Degree Candidates		Robert Young, PhD <i>Senior Vice President for Academic Administration</i> Dionne Felix, PhD <i>Associate Vice President for Academic Administration and Dean of Student Success and Retention</i> Corjena Cheung, PhD <i>Associate Vice President for Academic Administration and Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies</i> Karon Powell, JD <i>Director of Records and Advisement</i>
Alumni Association Welcome		Cheryl Torres, BA <i>Alumni Council Representative, Class of 2017</i>
Benediction.....		Mikalee Burrows, <i>MS graduate</i>
Recessional.....	<i>Rondeau</i>	Jean-Joseph Mouret

Music Coordinator: Ken Parsons, MMus, *School of Music Associate Professor*

Grand Marshal: Lisa Kuhlman, MBA, *University Senate Chair, School of Business Associate Professor*

Faculty Assistants: Jaclynn Huse, PhD, *School of Nursing Professor* and

Candy Dolcy, MSW, *School of Social Work Assistant Professor*

DOCTOR OF
NURSING PRACTICE PROJECTS

~~~~~

|                     |                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Montez Gorrell-Good | <i>Implementation and Feasibility of a Six Week<br/>Intermittent Fasting Wellness Program in Primary Care</i>                                               |
| Jannysse Gray       | <i>The Impact of a Social Wellness Intervention on the Perception of Social Support<br/>among Employees in a Mental Health Facility</i>                     |
| Madelene Hamann     | <i>The Effects of Attending Prediabetes Prevention Workshops on Improving<br/>Students' Awareness, Knowledge, and Interest</i>                              |
| Ariana Smith        | <i>Empowering Dietary Change: A Culturally Competent Nutrition Intervention for<br/>Hispanic Patients at the Agape Clinic</i>                               |
| John Smith          | <i>Implementing a Mental Health Workshop to Mitigate Burnout and Improve<br/>Job Satisfaction Among Psychiatric Technicians: A Mixed Methods Case Study</i> |

ACADEMIC REGALIA

~~~~~

The color of velvet trim on each hood represents the area of study. The color of the silk lining represents the university that conferred the degree. The color of the tassel represents the degree of the undergraduate.

Arts, Humanities, Interdisciplinary, Letters..... White	Nursing..... Apricot
Business Drab	Outdoor Leadership Russet
Communication Crimson	Physical Education..... Sage Green
Education Light Blue	Physical Therapy Teal
Engineering..... Orange	Public Administration, Foreign Service..... Peacock
Fine Arts Brown	Science..... Golden Yellow
Law Purple	Social Work Citron
Music..... Pink	Theology Scarlet

BACCALAUREATE DEGREE GRADUATES

Kirsten Taylor Aguirre Antolin	BSN Nursing
Brock McKenney Baer	BSN Nursing
Bret Alexander Ball, <i>Cum Laude</i>	BS Outdoor Leadership
Michael Alexander Bates	BS General Psychology
David Houston Beckworth, <i>Cum Laude</i>	BA Archaeology [Near Eastern Studies]; Biblical Studies
Isabelle Grace Berecz, <i>Magna Cum Laude</i>	BSN Nursing
Nylia Rayne Bravo-Bussey	BS Mass Communications [Advertising]
Traverse Michael Brown III	BS Business Administration; AS Accounting
Norelie Cabrera	BS Health Science
Roy Inhyeok Cho	BSN Nursing
Joseph Michael Cirigliano	BA Political Science
Laurence Alexander Clayton	BS Business Management
Delma Ruby Garcia	BSN Nursing
Nolwin Abner Guilarte, <i>Cum Laude</i>	BS Digital Communications [Media Production]
Youngbin Je	BS Medical Science
Renee Elizabeth Kendall, <i>Cum Laude</i>	BSN Nursing
Hayden Jay Kobza, <i>Cum Laude</i>	BA Journalism
Cooper G. Larsen	BT Construction Management
Dwight Joseph Marbun	BSN Nursing
Anderson Grace Mills, <i>Magna Cum Laude</i>	BSN Nursing
Alexander Mireles	BT Construction Management
Nathalie Tesia Phan, <i>Cum Laude</i>	BSN Nursing
Giann Carlo Pinilla	BS Psychology [Industrial/Organizational]
Micah Perri Putrasahan, <i>Summa Cum Laude</i>	BS Medical Science
Seth Nigel Robertson, <i>Magna Cum Laude</i>	BSE Engineering [Computer Engineering]
Crystal Rodriguez	BSN Nursing
David Rhys Sharpe, <i>Summa Cum Laude</i>	BA Archaeology [Near Eastern Studies], Computer Science
Efrain Eli'sha Vargas	BA Mathematics

ASSOCIATE DEGREE GRADUATES

Nicole Roberta Mann, <i>Cum Laude</i>	AS Allied Health [Pre-Speech Language Pathology and Audiology]
Isabelle Miriam Touma	AS Allied Health [Pre-Physical Therapy]

MASTER'S DEGREE GRADUATES

Olivia Joy Abbott	MSN Primary Care-Family Nurse Practitioner
Pablo E. Bentancurt Ledesma	MMin Evangelism and Ministry
Mikah Kristiane Bradley	MSW Social Work [School]
Ke'isha Charmain Bunion	MSW Social Work [School]
Fidencio Burgueño III	MSN Primary Care-Family Nurse Practitioner
Mikalee Renae Burrows	MS School Counseling
Hannah Lee Camp	MS School Counseling
Claudia Hutchins	MSW Social Work [School]
Carlton James Maloy	MSN Primary Care-Family Nurse Practitioner
Emily Pinheiro Raimundo	MSW Social Work [Mental Health in Social Work]
Nicole Ressel	MSN Primary Care-Family Nurse Practitioner
Jason Shaw	MMin Evangelism and Ministry
Robert Charles Whitner, Jr.	MMin Church Leadership and Management

DOCTORAL DEGREE GRADUATES

Montez Gorrell-Goode	DNP Lifestyle Medicine
Jannysse Gray.....	DNP Lifestyle Medicine
Madelene Gagatam Hamann.....	DNP Lifestyle Medicine
Ariana Nicole Smith	DNP Primary Care-Family Nurse Practitioner
John Pinson Smith.....	DNP Primary-Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

The Commencement program does not constitute an official list of graduates.

GUEST GRADUATES

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY

Amelia Noelle Hess	AT Aviation [Maintenance]
--------------------------	---------------------------

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

Katelynn Rose Webster.....	MA Literature
----------------------------	---------------

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE AT PRESQUE ISLE

Angela Marie Lippard, <i>Summa Cum Laude</i>	BA English
--	------------

WILLIAM JEWELL COLLEGE

Ann Betsa M. Pierre	MBA Entrepreneurial
---------------------------	---------------------

HONOR CORDS



- Gold Cord—*Summa Cum Laude*—3.90+ GPA
- Silver Cord—*Magna Cum Laude*—3.75-3.89 GPA
- Green Cord—*Cum Laude*—3.50-3.74 GPA
- Maroon and Navy Blue—Student Missions

All other colors represent honors societies in the various academic areas.

S U M M A R Y



UNDERGRADUATE GRADUATES—30
(THREE HAVE TWO OR MORE MAJORS OR DEGREES)

MASTER’S GRADUATES—13

DOCTORAL GRADUATES—5

DEPARTMENTS/SCHOOLS WITH
BACCALAUREATE DEGREES TO BE CONFERRED

Biology and Allied Health.....	2	Health and Kinesiology	2
Business	2	History and Political Science	1
Computing	1	Journalism and Communication.....	3
Education, Psychology, and Counseling.....	2	Mathematics	1
Engineering and Physics	1	Nursing.....	10
Applied Technology.....	2	Religion.....	3

DEPARTMENTS/SCHOOLS WITH
ASSOCIATE DEGREES TO BE CONFERRED

Biology and Allied Health.....	2	Business	1
--------------------------------	---	----------------	---

SCHOOLS WITH
MASTER’S DEGREES TO BE CONFERRED

Education, Psychology, and Counseling.....	2	Religion.....	3
Nursing.....	4	Social Work	4

DOCTORAL DEGREES TO BE CONFERRED

Nursing.....	5
--------------	---

THE MACE



The mace is a traditional symbol used to communicate and designate authority. The Southern Adventist University mace was crafted in 1986 by John Durichek, a Southern alum. Southern's mace represents its heritage and *raison d'être* (reason for existence). The base is of pine from Jones Hall, built in 1917 and razed in 1985. The main staff is of walnut. The seven rings represent completeness. The four-sided ebony segment is seen as Southern's underlying educational philosophy—balanced mental, spiritual, physical, and social development for each student. The brass flames represent the Holy Spirit.

Bearing the mace is the grand marshal, Lisa Kuhlman, chair of the University Senate and associate professor in the School of Business. Her regalia is evergreen, the university's traditional color.

SPECIAL THANKS



Academic Administration
Advancement
Alumni Relations
Audio Visual
Blluum Floral and Event Design
(stage flowers)
Campus Safety
Collegedale Police Department
College Press
Energy Management

Financial Administration
First Lady Ann Shaw (stage decor)
Food Services
Graduate and Professional Studies
Marketing and University Relations
President's Office
Records and Advisement
School of Music
Service Department
Southern Printing

We extend our gratitude especially to parents, fellow students, and guests.

ALUMNI HOMECOMING WEEKEND



October 22-25, 2026

We are excited to invite you back to Southern Adventist University for a weekend of reminiscing, reconnecting, and celebrating. This fall, join fellow alumni from near and far to relive your favorite memories, enjoy beloved Homecoming traditions, and experience exciting new events!

Mark your calendars for Homecoming Weekend 2026.

Learn more and register at southern.edu/homecoming.

On behalf of the Alumni Association, congratulations to our newest alumni, the Class of 2026!