



**COLLEGE OF
GRADUATE STUDIES**

2026 COMMENCEMENT



College of Graduate Studies
2026 Commencement

Midwestern University • Glendale Campus

Wednesday, the Third of June
Two Thousand and Twenty-Six



ORDER OF CEREMONY

Processional: *Pomp and Circumstance*

THE AUDIENCE WILL PLEASE STAND

Introduction: Kaila Dougherty, O.D., D.H.A., FAAO
Chief Operating Officer

National Anthem: *The Star-Spangled Banner* by F.S. Key

Opening Reflection: Elizabeth Hull, Ph.D.
Director, Biomedical Sciences Program

President's Address: Joshua C. Baker, O.D., M.S.
President and Chief Executive Officer

Dean's Welcome: Sandra E. Inouye, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Graduate Studies, Glendale Campus and Downers Grove Campus

Presentation of Graduates: Dr. Inouye

Conferral of Degrees: Dr. Baker

Graduate Hooding of the Class of 2026

**Presentation of Midwestern University Coin
Honoring our Military Graduates**

Student Remarks: Pegah Biparva
Precision Medicine Program, Class of 2026

Closing Remarks: Dr. Inouye

Closing Reflection: Garilyn Jentarra, Ph.D.
Director, Precision Medicine Program

Recessional

Announcer:

Sudhindra R. Gadagkar, Ph.D.

Hooders:

Delrae Eckman, Ph.D.

Tiffany Hughes, Ph.D., M.P.H.

Elizabeth Hull, Ph.D.

Garilyn Jentarra, Ph.D.

Student Marshals:

Kimberly Bussey, Ph.D.

Gerald Call, Ph.D.

Adebayo Molehin, Ph.D.

Dhritiman Samanta, Ph.D.

Faculty Marshals:

David Carroll, Ph.D.

Lisa Kronstad, Ph.D.

Felicia Trembath, Ph.D.

Mace Bearers:

Mitra Esfandiarei, Ph.D.

David Line, Ph.D.



MASTER OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES CLASS OF 2026

Archish Anand
Los Angeles, CA

Amber Cade
Miami, FL

Matthew Cole
Middletown, IN

Karina Cota
Rio Rico, AZ

Kayla De La Paz
Thousand Palms, CA

Shannan Ganpat
Queens, NY

Hanna Mirshojae
Calabasas, CA

John Neal
Conway, AR

Eric Robertson
Newbury Park, CA

Kaitlyn Rosito
Harrisburg, PA

Leslie Souders
Springfield, MO

Cloe Wesenberg
Oshkosh, WI

MASTER OF ARTS IN BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES CLASS OF 2026

Basma Abrar
Houston, TX

Judi Al-Ayash
Tempe, AZ

Andrew Alvarez
Phoenix, AZ

Caden Anderson
Wilmington, DE

Nicole Ardelean
Scottsdale, AZ

Aubrie Arndt
Peoria, AZ

Brandon Arnold
Albuquerque, NM

Amal Ather
Naperville, IL

Mark Aziz
Langley, British Columbia, Canada

Elaina Benka
El Dorado, CA

Emma Benson
Pepperell, MA

Jacob Blain
Chandler, AZ

Souzan Brimo
Phoenix, AZ

Hailey Bui
Newport Coast, CA

Adrienne Calderon
Los Angeles, CA

Brianna Carey
Glendale, AZ

Deeana Castaneda
Tulare, CA

Matthew Croop
Canton, MI

Abhishek Dave
Riverview, FL

Rebecca Davidov
Phoenix, AZ

Leanne De Castro
San Tan Valley, AZ

Trevor Deffenbaugh
Moorpark, CA

Sukhjot Dhanoa
Brampton, Ontario, Canada

Dallen Duncan
Cedar City, UT

Benjamin Egli
Phoenix, AZ

Semyon Eydelnant
Tucson, AZ

Ethan Figueroa
Tucson, AZ

Stephen Gaughran
Cary, NC

Olivia Gehrke
Bremerton, WA

Quentin Guliford
Phoenix, AZ

Minseok Han
Pomona, CA

Nellie Happ
Scottsdale, AZ

Mawe Herrera Rivero
Peoria, AZ

William Hodor
Windermere, FL

Elizabeth Hutson
Amarillo, TX

Nabeel Ilyas
Litchfield Park, AZ

Jason Jalovec
Glendale, AZ

Dallin Jones
Cody, WY

Arshia Kargarzadeh
Denver, CO

Saifullah Khan
Queen Creek, AZ

Hannah Lee
Holmen, WI

Payton Lucas
Murrieta, CA

Camryn Macias
Oxnard, CA

Juan Maldonado Flores
Denver, CO

Greyson McLeod
Ellensburg, WA

MASTER OF ARTS IN BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES CLASS OF 2026 *Continued*

Shahin Mehrara
Tarzana, CA

Darien Meyers
Colorado Springs, CO

Donia Mohtashami
Irvine, CA

Harris Mujkanovic
Peoria, AZ

Ekenediri Obi
Houston, TX

Wonbin Park
Chino, CA

Anokhi Patel
Corona, CA

Leonardo Rabban
El Cajon, CA

Emily Raketic
Newark, IL

Vachan Rao
Tempe, AZ

Alexia Sioda
University Place, WA

Carly Skemp
Onalaska, WI

Daniel Standring
Crescent City, CA

Leif Swanson
Spokane, WA

Jayne Terpstra
Phoenix, AZ

Vanessa Valbuena
Scottsdale, AZ

Fabian Villegas
Yuma, AZ

Tian Yu Wang
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Andrea Weber
Trumbull, CT

Taiya Wilder
Benton Harbor, MI

Alison Winsterman
Central City, NE

Megan Wright
Gilbert, AZ

Jeffrey Young
Colorado Springs, CO

MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH CLASS OF 2026

Sundos Alani
Orange County, CA

Kaley Boone
Artesia, NM

Jennifer Hoover
Mountain View, CA

Sara Kayser
Northridge, CA

Melissa Rabe
Minot, ND

Caitlin Samplawski
Horicon, WI

Maddison Trawick
Jacksonville, FL

Seth Turner
Rochester, MI

Kelvin Waiganjo
Santa Clarita, CA

Irene Yang
Cottonwood, AZ

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN PRECISION MEDICINE CLASS OF 2026

Pegah Biparva
Scottsdale, AZ

Tiffany Diaz
Latrobe, PA

Jesus Guerrero Jr.
San Antonio, TX

Leanne Miele
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

Julian Moore
Stuart, FL

Nima Sadeghi
Scottsdale, AZ

POST-GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN PRECISION MEDICINE

Kyra Ina
Tampa, FL

Gabriela Rajic
Urbana, IL

Keri Scheidt
Arvada, CO

Megan Schmad
Berthoud, CO

Andrianna Walsh
Plano, TX

Jackson White
Dallas, TX



COLLEGE OF GRADUATE STUDIES FACULTY

Anatomy

Karen Baab, Ph.D.
Justin Georgi, Ph.D.
Aryeh Grossman, Ph.D.
Wade Grow, Ph.D.
Margaret Hall, Ph.D.
Christopher Heesy, Ph.D.
T. Bucky Jones, Ph.D.
Jason Kaufman, Ph.D.
Andrew Lee, Ph.D.
Leigha Lynch, Ph.D.
Kathleen Muldoon, Ph.D.
Matthew O'Neill, Ph.D.
Jose Rodriguez Sosa, M.V.Z., Ph.D.
Erin Simons, Ph.D.
Heather Smith, Ph.D.
Kathryn Townsend, Ph.D.
Carrie Veilleux, Ph.D.

**Biochemistry and
Molecular Genetics**

Nancy Bae, Ph.D.
David Carroll, Ph.D.
Jose Hernandez, Ph.D.
Thu Huynh, Ph.D.
Chongwoo Kim, Ph.D.
Kathryn Lawson, Ph.D.
Robert Mercer, Ph.D.

**Biochemistry and
Molecular Genetics**

Minsub Shim, Ph.D.
Mark Swanson, Ph.D.

Biomedical Sciences

Lori Buhlman, Ph.D.
Delrae Eckman, Ph.D.
Mitra Esfandiarei, Ph.D.
Sudhindra Gadagkar, Ph.D.
Elizabeth Hull, Ph.D.
Nathan Johnson, Ph.D.
Carleton Buck Jones, Ph.D.
John Phillips, Ph.D.
Brian Wellensiek, Ph.D.

**Microbiology and
Immunology**

Fernando Gonzalez, Ph.D.
Nicholas Haley, D.V.M., Ph.D.
John Hnida, Ph.D.
Sam Katzif, Ph.D.
Lisa Kronstad, Ph.D.
Kathryn Leyva, Ph.D.
Adebayo Molehin, Ph.D.
Dhritiman Samanta, Ph.D.
Savannah Sanchez, Ph.D.

Pathology

Parveen Ranjan, M.D., M.P.H.
Tony Tullot, M.D.

Pharmacology

Gerald Call, Ph.D.
Douglas Jones, Ph.D.
Shaleen Korch, Ph.D.
Jeffrey Norris, D.V.M., Ph.D.
Pamela Potter, Ph.D.
Edward Wickstead, Ph.D.

Physiology

Layla Al-Nakkash, Ph.D.
Joao Carvalho-De-Souza, D.V.M., Ph.D.
Jeff Hord, Ph.D.
Estela Jauregui, Ph.D.
Christopher Olson, Ph.D.
Ann Revill, Ph.D.
Tobias Riede, D.V.M., Ph.D.
Johana Vallejo-Elias, Ph.D.

Precision Medicine

Kimberly Bussey, Ph.D.
Ying He, Ph.D.
Kolla Kristjansdottir, Ph.D.
Garilyn Jentarra, Ph.D.
Rosa Ventrella, Ph.D.

Public Health

Karen Gruszynski, D.V.M., M.P.H.,
Ph.D., DACVPM,
Tiffany Hughes, Ph.D., M.P.H.,
M.B.A., FGSA
David Line, Ph.D.
Felicia Trembath, Ph.D.
Mariah Zeigler, D.V.M.,
M.P.H., DACVPM

ACADEMIC REGALIA AND PROCESSIONAL

Gown

The gown is the cornerstone of the academic costume that has its origins in 12th and 13th century Europe, a period when universities were being formed. Today, Midwestern University follows guidelines established by the American Council on Education. All graduates wear black gowns, with the front panels of the doctoral gown trimmed in black velvet. Each sleeve of the doctoral gown is adorned with three bars of black velvet with bell-shaped wrist ends. The master's gown is unadorned, with the wrist ends of the sleeve open oblongs that extend beyond the hand.

Arizona College of Optometry

Discipline Color: Seafoam
Liner Color: Navy
Chevron Color: Gold

Arizona College of Osteopathic Medicine

Discipline Color: Kelly Green
Liner Color: Navy
Chevron Color: Gold

Arizona College of Podiatric Medicine

Discipline Color: Nile Green
Liner Color: Navy
Chevron Color: Gold

College of Dental Medicine–Arizona

Discipline Color: Lilac
Liner Color: Navy
Chevron Color: Gold

College of Graduate Studies Biomedical Sciences Program

Discipline Color: Gold
Liner Color: Navy
Chevron Color: Gold

College of Graduate Studies Precision Medicine Program

Discipline Color: Gold
Liner Color: Navy
Chevron Color: Gold

College of Graduate Studies Public Health Program

Discipline Color: Salmon
Liner Color: Navy
Chevron Color: Gold

College of Health Sciences Cardiovascular Science Program

Discipline Color: Gold
Liner Color: Navy
Chevron Color: Gold

College of Health Sciences Clinical Psychology Program (Doctor)

Discipline Color: Royal Blue
Liner Color: Navy
Chevron Color: Gold

College of Health Sciences Clinical Psychology Program (Master)

Discipline Color: Gold
Liner Color: Navy
Chevron Color: Gold

College of Health Sciences Nurse Anesthesia Program

Discipline Color: Apricot
Liner Color: Navy
Chevron Color: Gold

College of Health Sciences Nursing Program (Doctor)

Discipline Color: Apricot
Liner Color: Navy
Chevron Color: Gold

College of Health Sciences Nursing Program (Master)

Discipline Color: Apricot
Liner Color: Navy
Chevron Color: Gold

College of Health Sciences Occupational Therapy Program

Discipline Color: Sage Green
Liner Color: Navy
Chevron Color: Gold

College of Health Sciences Physical Therapy Program

Discipline Color: Teal
Liner Color: Navy
Chevron Color: Gold

College of Health Sciences Physician Assistant Program

Discipline Color: Gold
Liner Color: Navy
Chevron Color: Gold

College of Health Sciences Speech-Language Pathology Program

Discipline Color: Crimson
Liner Color: Navy
Chevron Color: Gold

College of Pharmacy, Glendale

Discipline Color: Olive
Liner Color: Navy
Chevron Color: Gold

College of Veterinary Medicine

Discipline Color: Gray
Liner Color: Navy
Chevron Color: Gold



Hood

The hood, a commencement accessory placed around the neck that drapes down the back of the graduate's gown, signifies achievement in higher education. Its velvet top layer is the discipline color of the program of study. Both the lining and the chevron trim colors are those of the college or the program. The doctoral hood is four feet in length; the master's hood is three and one-half feet in length. At Midwestern University, the hood is carried over the right arm of the graduate in the processional and is placed on the graduate during the ceremony.

Tam

All Midwestern University graduates wear black velvet tams with black (master's programs) or gold (doctoral programs) tassels that hang to the right front side.

Honor Cords

The honor cord, nearly six feet in length, is worn around the graduate's neck and drapes down the front of the gown. The different cord colors designate the academic achievement or honor status in a national academic/professional society. A graduate can wear multiple cords if he or she qualifies for individual honors.

Midwestern University Coins

A custom minted coin is a military tradition to recognize achievement, create incentive, improve safety, or show appreciation for duty, dedication, or a job well done. Midwestern University proudly presents graduates who are in the military or entering the military following graduation with a coin to honor their service to our country.

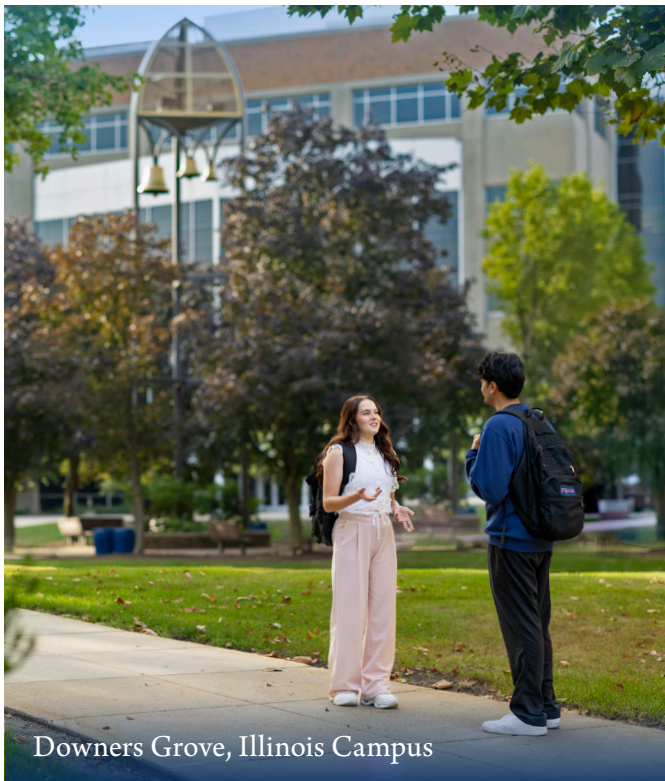
HISTORY OF MIDWESTERN UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1900 as the American College of Osteopathic Medicine and Surgery in Chicago, Illinois, Midwestern University began with a clear mission to educate healthcare professionals in a not-for-profit, student-centered environment. Early leadership and faculty built a strong reputation for academic excellence and hands-on clinical training, helping shape the future of osteopathic medicine.

The University's growth reflects both vision and responsiveness to the needs of healthcare. In 1986, the institution relocated to Downers Grove, Illinois, creating space for expanded programs across the health sciences. In 1995, Midwestern University established a second campus in Glendale, Arizona, significantly broadening its reach and impact. Over time, the University expanded to include programs in pharmacy, dental medicine, optometry, health sciences, podiatry, nursing, biomedical science, and veterinary medicine.

Today, Midwestern University is a comprehensive graduate university with two campuses, multiple colleges, and a wide range of healthcare programs. Students learn in modern facilities and gain valuable experience through interprofessional education, clinical education, and community-based clinics. The University's One Health initiative further emphasizes the connection between human, animal, and environmental health, preparing students to collaborate across disciplines to address complex global challenges.

Throughout its history, the University has remained committed to its founding principles of academic excellence, compassionate care, and student success, preparing our graduates to thrive in a rapidly changing healthcare environment.





ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP TEAM

Joshua C. Baker, O.D., M.S.
President and Chief Executive Officer

Thomas A. Boyle, D.O., M.B.A., FACEP, FACOEP
Dean, Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine

Sheri Brownstein, D.M.D., M.Ed.
Dean, College of Dental Medicine-Arizona

Jared Chamberlain, Ph.D.
*Dean, College of Health Sciences,
Glendale Campus*

Megan Dallianis, Ed.D.
Dean of Student Services, Downers Grove Campus

Mitchell R. Emerson, Ph.D.
*Dean, College of Pharmacy,
Downers Grove and Glendale Campuses*

Alicia E. Feis, O.D., FAAO
Dean, Arizona College of Optometry

Carla Gartrell, D.V.M., J.D., DACVIM
Dean, College of Veterinary Medicine

Harold J. Haering, Jr., D.M.D.
Dean, College of Dental Medicine-Illinois

Brianne N. Hobbs, O.D., Ph.D., FAAO
Dean, Chicago College of Optometry

Sandra E. Inouye, Ph.D.
*Dean, College of Graduate Studies,
Downers Grove and Glendale Campuses*

Jeffrey L. Jensen, D.P.M., FACFAS
Dean, Arizona College of Podiatric Medicine

Lori A. Kemper, D.O., M.S., FACOFP
Dean, Arizona College of Osteopathic Medicine

Coretta C. Patterson, D.V.M., DACVIM-SA
Dean, Chicago College of Veterinary Medicine

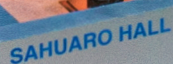
Sarah Radtke, Ed.D., ATC
*Dean, College of Health Sciences,
Downers Grove Campus*

Shannon Sesterhenn, Ed.D., M.S.
Dean of Student Services, Glendale Campus

Yir Gloria Yueh, Ph.D.
Provost



SAHUARO HALL





Tomorrow's Healthcare Team

Glendale Campus
19555 North 59th Avenue
Glendale, Arizona 85308
www.midwestern.edu