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126TH ANNUAL

**MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS  
COMMENCEMENT**

**SATURDAY, MAY 17 | 11 A.M.  
AMSLER CAMPUS CENTER  
NORTH ADAMS, MA**

Processional

America the Beautiful ..... Sajaira Hudson,  
Rachel Lamarre,  
and Aedan Maginnis, Class of 2025  
Arranged by Lin-Manuel Miranda

Greetings ..... Dr. James F. Birge, *President*  
Brigh Cote, Class of 2025  
Paul Paradiso, MBA Class of 2025

Conferring of Honorary Degrees ..... Dr. James F. Birge, *President*

Commencement Address ..... Kiese Laymon, MFA  
Libbie Shearn Moody Professor of English and Creative Writing at Rice University

Presentation of Candidates

Closing ..... Dr. James F. Birge, *President*

Recessional

## TRADITION OF THE GATES

Historically, European universities were often located in walled cities or towns, requiring students to pass through gates or arches to enter the university grounds. The gates symbolized the transition from the secular world to the world of learning, marking a crucial milestone in a student's academic journey. This tradition was carried over when universities were founded in the United States, and over time, the practice of passing through the gates became associated with two essential events: Convocation and Commencement.

Convocation, held at the beginning of the academic year, is a formal ceremony welcoming new students to the college community. Commencement, held at the end of the academic year, is a graduation ceremony where students receive their degrees and are recognized for their academic achievements. Passing through the gates at Convocation and Commencement serves as a symbolic way of marking the beginning and end of a student's academic journey, reminding them of the significance of education and the role that universities play in shaping individuals and society.

Today, this tradition continues at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, and passing through the campus gates remains a profound and deeply meaningful ritual for students past and present. In 1894 the institution was founded as the North Adams Normal School to provide teacher training to students in North Adams. The first education teachers who attended the Normal School passed through the gates of Murdock Hall, the original North Adams Normal School building that still stands on the MCLA campus today.

As MCLA has grown and evolved over the years, the long-standing gate procession ceremony at Convocation and Commencement has remained a paramount component of the institution's identity. The gates of Murdock Hall serve as a reminder of MCLA's roots in teacher education, the important role that the college has played in the Commonwealth, and the transformative power of a liberal arts education.

## GREETINGS FROM FACULTY ASSOCIATION

On behalf of the MCLA faculty, our deepest and most heartfelt congratulations!

As we watch you cross the stage today, we are filled with both pride and a touch of melancholy. We will miss your intelligence, enthusiasm, and creativity on campus.

However, we are confident that you will carry these qualities with you as you step into the world.

We have prepared you for the challenges ahead. Yes - the homework, quizzes, presentations, and final papers were demanding. But all those deadlines shaped you into a competitive professional and a thoughtful, responsible citizen. Your critical thinking is sharper because of the courses you took with us. Your awareness of local and global issues is deeper because of the experiences we crafted for you inside the classroom and beyond. Your

leadership now reflects respect, empathy, and open-mindedness because we showed you what it means to lead with integrity in a ruthless and chaotic world.

Here is my call to action for you. Today racism, sexism, classism, xenophobia, and transphobia persist and thrive: confront these injustices by standing firmly for equity and freedom. Climate change, income inequality, gun violence, and endless wars require massive courage to stop them: get involved, speak up, and push back against oppression. Authoritarianism and oligarchy have risen: you must defend democracy with resolve. In an age overwhelmed by disinformation and demagoguery, draw on the tools you've gained in the classroom: research with integrity, speak with clarity, communicate with

purpose, and hold power to account.

You made a wise choice in MCLA. Here, you were not just another face in a 400-seat lecture hall. We saw you, knew you and valued you for your unique strengths and aspirations. We may have challenged you more than you expected, but we never stopped believing in your potential.

We are very proud of all you have achieved. It is an honor for us to serve the public good at this public institution. Remember us. And when you can, support us—so that we may continue giving to others as much as we gave to you.

Congratulations Again!

Graziana D'Elia-Brillante, Ph.D.  
*Professor, Modern Languages*  
*President, MCLA Faculty Association*

## GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT

To the members of the class of 2025:

Congratulations on reaching this milestone achievement in your educational life – receiving your college degree!

Throughout your time as an MCLA student, you have shown us your grit, determination, and resilient spirit. You have overcome challenges, made lifelong friends, discovered your purpose, and grown both personally and professionally into the amazing individual you are today. I am honored that MCLA was a part of that journey and proud that we provided this pathway into the next phase of your life.

Today I welcome you into MCLA's family of alumni. This is a strong and knowledgeable group that will be your connection to your years at MCLA. I encourage you to use the various networks available to you as

part of our Alumni Relations program. Please also take a moment to thank your Trailblazer Team – faculty, staff, family, friends, and even yourself – for the years of support and hard work to get to this place. It is my hope that you take that sense of teamwork and camaraderie to share with others as you move forward in your chosen path.

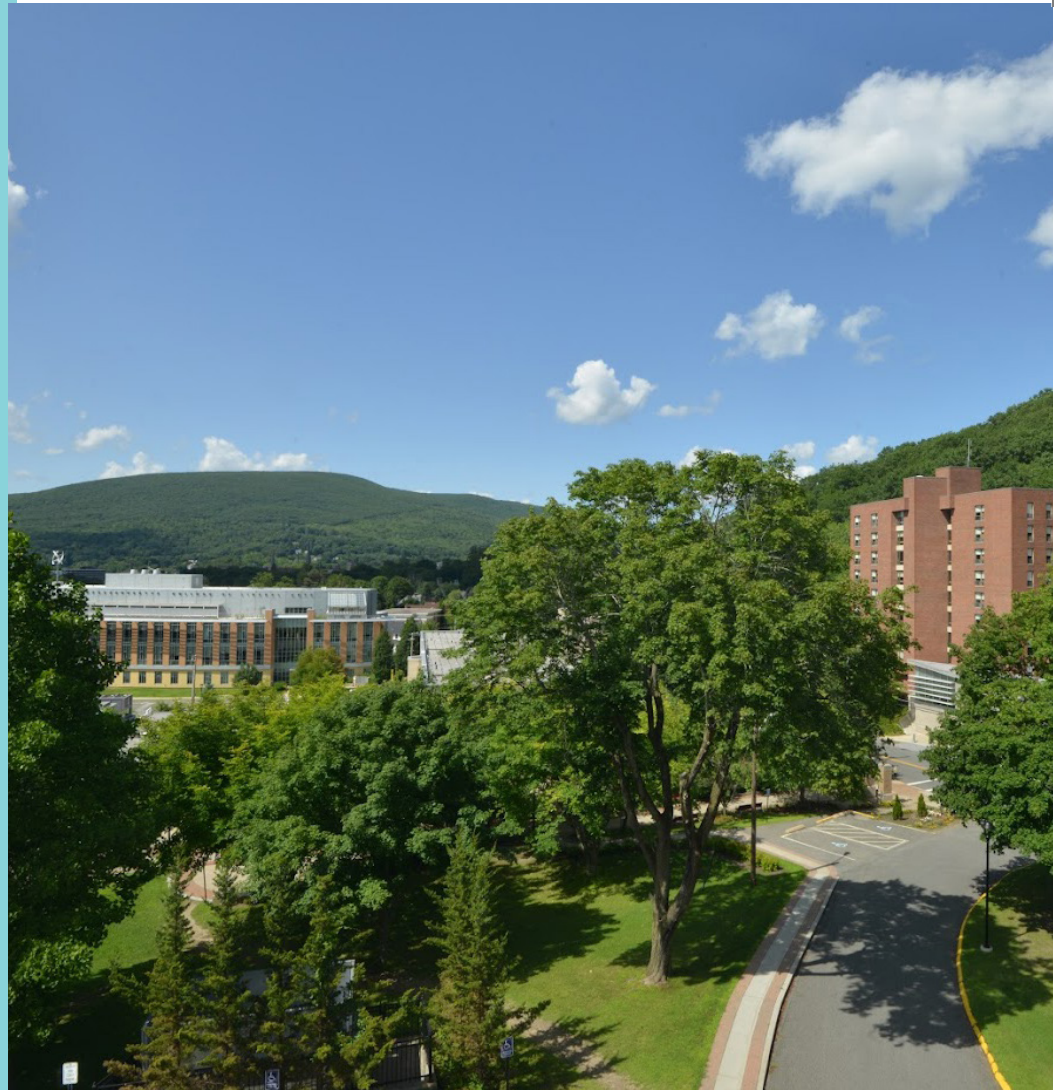
On behalf of the Trustees, faculty, staff, and administrators of MCLA, I offer my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes for a bright and impactful future.

James F. Birge, Ph.D.  
*President*

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

With gratitude and humility, we respectfully acknowledge that Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts stands on the ancestral homelands of the Stockbridge-Munsee Mohicans, who are the Indigenous peoples of this land. Following tremendous hardship after being forced from their valued homelands, they continued as a sovereign Tribal Nation in Wisconsin, which is where they reside today. We pay honor and respect to their ancestors past and present as we commit to building a more inclusive and equitable space for all.

— Land acknowledgment from the Stockbridge-Munsee Community





# HONOR SOCIETIES AND SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

## ALANA

Kente Cloth

## ALANA CLUB E-BOARD

Purple and Black Cord and Pin

## ALL ACADEMIC SCHOLAR ATHLETES

Gold Sash with MCLA and MASCAC Insignia

## ALPHA CHI NATIONAL COLLEGE HONOR SOCIETY

Gold Medallion on a Blue and Green Cord

## ALPHA LAMBDA DELTA FIRST YEAR NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

Gold, Red, and White Cord

## CHI ALPHA SIGMA NATIONAL COLLEGE ATHLETE HONOR SOCIETY

Bronze Medallion

## DELTA MU DELTA BUSINESS HONOR SOCIETY

Purple and Gold Cord

## MULTICULTURAL ADVANCEMENT

Black, Green, Red, and Yellow multi-color Cord

## PHI ALPHA THETA HISTORY PROFESSIONAL SOCIETY

Madonna Red and Blue Cord with multi-color  
Tassel

## PI GAMMA MU HONOR SOCIETY

Blue and White Cord

## PI SIGMA ALPHA POLITICAL SCIENCE HONOR SOCIETY

Red, White, and Black multi-color Tassel Cord

## PSI CHI PSYCHOLOGY HONOR SOCIETY

Gold and Blue Cord

## RHO PI SIGMA NATIONAL RESIDENCE HALL HONORARY

Blue and White Cord

## SIGMA PI SIGMA PHYSICS HONOR SOCIETY

White and Green Cord

## SIGMA TAU DELTA ENGLISH HONOR SOCIETY

Red and Black Cord

## STUDENT PHILANTHROPY PROGRAM

Blue and Gold Cord

## WOMEN, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY STUDIES MINOR

Purple Cord

## STUDENT VOLUNTEER

Silver Cord

## STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

Red and Blue Cord

## VETERAN'S SERVICE RECOGNITION

Red, White, and Blue Cord

## ART

**Matt Flanagan**  
**Maxwell Fyfe**  
**J.C. Innocent**

**Mannie McBride**  
**Cleo Virginia Murphy**  
**Skylah Dominga Zayas**

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## ARTS MANAGEMENT

**Tessa Clark-Gartner**  
**Maxwell Fyfe**  
**Julien Gamache**

**J.C. Innocent**  
**Rachel Lamarre**

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## BIOLOGY

**Solaima Antunez**  
**Alexandra Grace Bednar**  
**Alexandria Brelsford**  
**Maya T. Dey**  
**Lena Paige DuPont**  
**Karli Fisher**

**Cameron J. Glasco**  
**Kassie Heck**  
**Britney Lomax**  
**Natalie Rich**  
**Ethan Lloyd Smith**  
**Michelle Williams**



## **BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

Joshua Jay Bologh  
Aidan M. Brett  
Garrett Brunette  
Colby Douglas Burleson  
Raymond Cable  
Malik Campbell  
Kylie Clay  
Ronan Connors  
Gabriel Dias  
Brad Dowd  
Craig Dowd  
Elyjah Garneau  
Liam Gibney  
Lauren Giusti  
Quentin Gittens

Brady Hamel  
Brandon James Hunt  
David Kankam  
Karen Lambert-Toomey  
Marcos Lopez  
Rebecca Loureiro  
Ryan McDonald  
Kelly Ott  
Sultan Hussain Panahi  
Agnieszka Ramirez  
Jacob Richardson  
Deni Rizvic  
Hayden J. Ryan  
Lain Vigiard

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## **CHEMISTRY**

Dylan J. Hall

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## **COMMUNICATION**

David Babineau  
Owen Matthew Brown  
Alexander Thomas Conklin

Brigh Cote  
Anna Najimy  
Karen Yamada

## COMPUTER SCIENCE

Emerson Arthur  
Joshua Boucher  
Thomas Bruso  
Nathan Caron  
Donovan Howell  
Marko Iwasiwka

Chase Klemansky  
Jacob Miller  
Ethan Roach  
Austin Rock  
Viral Shah  
Nicholas Shepard

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## EDUCATION

Sierra Funck

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## ENGLISH

David Babineau  
Aurora Bullett  
Edgar Perez Brooks  
Micaela Carey  
Kacie Corrine  
Copeland Starly Donati  
Maciel Estrella

Spencer Fossett  
Fallon Jade Maloney  
Alexander Miller  
Cassidy Patnode

## ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Seth Dupee  
Trevor Gardner  
Nathan Francis Haley  
Chloe L. Martel  
Ty Mazzeo

Veronica Nault  
Brannon O'Donovan  
Jakob Roy Revett  
Jeremy Stewart  
Meaghan Renee Tully

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## HISTORY

Michael Boudreau  
Patrick Casagrande  
Scott Courtier

Matthew Damon  
Ethan Mosher

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## HEALTH SCIENCES

Ezmeralda Albright  
Juliette Barney  
Kouadjo E. Behanzin  
Matthew Aaron Belfance  
Kendall Booth  
Angie Carias  
Kristina Chilson  
Veronica Deacon  
Chloie Garber

Conor Green  
Rebekah Julmiste  
Danielle LaPierre  
Sam Noyes  
Emily Overstreet  
Avani Syrus Richardson  
Julianna Romero-Palomares  
Ethan Lloyd Smith  
William Walsh

## INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

Isabel Beauchamp  
Cristhian Alberto Cabrera Forero  
Lisa Christman  
Vicki Corl  
Jason Frazier  
Danielle Giardina-Marchbanks  
Lori Goodell  
Isamaya Hagstrom

Victoria Leja  
Richellmarie Luckey  
Misha Patel  
Samantha Rodriguez  
Breanna Sumy  
Victoria H. Tetreault  
Anna Howland White  
Hakimm Jamal Wright

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## MATHEMATICS

Cody Lucido

Ashley Pacheco

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## MUSIC, INDUSTRY AND PERFORMANCE

Adam Loubsky-Lonergan

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## PERFORMING ARTS

Shawn Prince

Maia Rice

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## PHILOSOPHY

Starly Donati

Edward Hall

## **POLITICAL SCIENCE**

**Matthew Castillo**  
**Lori Lester**  
**Armanni Rios**

**Anthony Lee Thomas**  
**Charles Edward Tumavicus Darling**

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## **PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY HEALTH EDUCATION**

**Nicole Melo**

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## **PSYCHOLOGY**

**Ezmeralda Albright**  
**Alana Berard**  
**Emma Butler**  
**Alec Cabrera-Palencia**  
**Kevin Chen**  
**Xavier Delisle**  
**Ava Dunville**  
**Armoni Ellerbee-Berkeley**  
**Chloie Garber**  
**Madison Goodell**  
**Mae Emily Hall**

**Melanie Rose Heath**  
**Sam Noyes**  
**Maia Rice**  
**Armanni Rios**  
**Hannah Santos**  
**Morgan Schnauber**  
**Ryan Taylor**  
**Katherine Tomasetti**  
**Madyson Torres**  
**Lora Woyton**  
**Maxwell Zimmer**

## RADIOLOGIC TECHNOLOGY

Rylie Bishop  
Bridget Collins  
Mackenzie Dobbert  
Amanda Forrest

Julia Michelle Graham  
Faith Lynn LeBlanc  
Ore-Oluwa Mejule  
Emily Elizabeth Rescott

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## SOCIOLOGY

Colin Connors  
Makenna M. Cross  
Cameron Gingrich  
Madison Goodell

Mae Emily Hall  
Annalyse Margaret Lewis  
Alexa Macdonald  
Summer Nichols  
Isaiah Tucker

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## THEATRE

Sajaira Glory Faith Hudson  
Rachel Lamarre

Aedan Maginnis

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## GRADUATE PROGRAMS

## CERTIFICATE OF ADVANCED GRADUATE STUDIES

Andrew Louis-Alan Levesque

Jesse Tanner McMillan

## MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Drew Armstrong  
Darell Dickerson  
Ted DiPietro  
Melissa E. Giftos  
Kloytse Kodio Edem

Bryana Bayly  
Melanie Medon  
Paul Paradiso  
Pius Roberts Jr.  
Joseph Serrano

## MASTER OF EDUCATION

Bethelhem Arrastia-Nowak  
Kelly Bridget Bellefontaine  
Meghan Braley  
Alexandria Brelsford  
Benjamin Scott Burdick  
Isabella Dill  
Jenna Margaret Dickinson  
Taylor Drinkwater  
Emily Durkee  
Matthew P. Funigiello  
Arantzazu Galdos-Shapiro  
Annemarie Kristine Garland  
Sarah Gomez  
Ashton Marie Goyette

Connor Charles Hadley  
Eli King  
Rachel Maher  
Margaret E. Maset  
Tess McCarthy  
John G. Merselis III  
Bronwyn Niece  
Katelyn Parks  
Marisa Plant  
Kyron Woolf Scott  
Rachelle Therrien  
Janeilah Vazquez

*Conferral of a degree occurs when the registrar finalizes the student's academic record and confirms that all requirements have been satisfied. Participation in the Commencement ceremony does not constitute conferral of the degree. Similarly, inclusion of a student's name in such publications as the Commencement program does not confirm eligibility for the degree.*





# MCLA

MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS  
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