



WashU Brown School

Brown School Recognition Ceremony

MAY 13, 2026

Field House, Athletic Complex

Washington University Danforth Campus



Events

Brown School Recognition Ceremony

Field House, Athletic Complex
Wednesday, May 13 | 11:00 a.m.

Washington University Commencement

Francis Olympic Field
Friday, May 15 | 9:00 a.m.

All-School Commencement Festival

*Mudd Field, Tisch Park
Friday, May 15*

Immediately following the University Commencement

Brown School Commencement Reception

Clark-Fox Forum, Hillman Hall
Friday, May 15

After you grab food, drinks, and snacks from the All-School Commencement Festival, please join faculty, staff, and students to mingle and cool off from the heat.

Order of Ceremony

Announcements

Tammy Orahood

Director of Global Programs

Welcome

Tyler De Shon

Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management

Student Speaker Address

Liz Smith

Introduction of the Address Speaker

Dorian Traube

Neidorff Family and Centene Corporation Dean of the Brown School

Address Speaker

Jason Q. Purnell

President and CEO of the James S. McDonnell Foundation

Announcement and Recognition of PhD Candidates

Shenyang Guo

Director, PhD Program in Social Work

Announcement of Masters Candidates

Tammy Orahood

Director of Global Programs

Recognition of MSW Candidates

Melissa Jonson-Reid

Associate Dean for Educational Programs

Recognition of MSP Candidates

Anna Shabsin

Assistant Dean of the Master of Social Policy Program

Recognition of Dual Degrees Candidates

Melissa Jonson-Reid

Associate Dean for Educational Programs

Recognition of Student Marshal & Student Speaker

Melissa Jonson-Reid

Associate Dean for Educational Programs

Dean's Remarks

Dorian Traube

Neidorff Family and Centene Corporation Dean of the Brown School

Recession

Da'Shaun Scott

Director for Academic Affairs and Advising

Recessional

Pomp & Circumstance

PhD Graduates

Cao Fang (Niki)

DISSERTATION TITLE

More Than Participation: Parent Engagement as a Pathway to Family Resilience in Autism Care

Recognized by Dissertation Chair Melissa Jonson-Reid, PhD

Gregory Joseph Gross

DISSERTATION TITLE

“We try to act so progressive”: A Multivariate and Interpretive Methods Study Examining Equity, Racialization and Interrelated Systems of Oppression and Privilege within HIV Service Organizations

Recognized by Dissertation Chair Virginia McKay, PhD

Jennifer Nattabi

DISSERTATION TITLE

Coping with Adversity: Exploring the Role of Protective Factors and their Impact on School Enrollment and Satisfaction Among Adolescents Living with HIV in Low-Resource Settings

Recognized by Dissertation Chair Mary McKay, PhD

Soobin Park

DISSERTATION TITLE

Social Connectedness among Older People Living with Dementia

Recognized by Dissertation Chair Vanessa Fabbre, PhD

Mustafa Rfat

DISSERTATION TITLE

Enhancing the Well-Being of Refugees with Disabilities Through Equitable Access to Essential Services: A Participatory Qualitative Study in the United States

Recognized by Dissertation Chair Jean-François Trani, PhD

Mary Katherine Shires

DISSERTATION TITLE

Mental Health in Rural School-Age Youth: Examining Trends in Adverse Childhood Experiences, Positive Childhood Experiences, and Family Resilience from 2018-2023

Recognized by Dissertation Chair Melissa Jonson-Reid, PhD

Yadi Tejada

DISSERTATION TITLE

Latino Fathers and Their Experience with Child Protective Services

Recognized by Dissertation Chair Brett Drake, PhD

MSW Candidates

Akouvi Aholouvi
Alejandra A Ahern
Aliyah C Wilcox
Audrey L Allison
Bari Anue
Abwola Denise Atimango
Alicia Michelle Bender
Wumei Blanche
Matthew Brazzolotto
Chloe Rhiann Brewer
Victoria L Briggiler
Marcus Malik Campbell
Kit Chew
Christian E Smalls
Zoe D Coffman
Pearl Cohen
Sarah N Cook
Samone Covington
Nathan Daugherty
Haley Day
Raul Gustavo De Castro Marques
Deezhi Noel Thinn
Lucy Demsky
Maddy Dixon
Meiying Du
Emma M East
Meghan Elliott
Claire Elmore
Cleopatra Elrashidy
Melissa Ettlenger
Astonish A Fann
Isla Belle Frazier
Jordan Fredrickson
Nathan E Frick

Ethan A Fudge
Jay Finck
Emily Elizabeth Fitzgerald
Gage Gage
Wen Gao
Lilly Gerringer
Olivia Gilbert
Mary Hamilton
Kareem Hammouda
Natasja Marie Haffner
Sarah Harding
Maggie Harper
Aida Hasanovic
Shonda Howard
Lang Huang
Zoe Janice Isbell
JB Jansky-Bingel
Katherine K Johnson
Sophie C Jones
Hannah Jumper
Mary A Kelly
Momo Kikuchi
Stanley King
Aliza Kleinberg
Joanna Lara
Bailey N Leser
Sheltoria Love
Daryn Jenall Lowe
Christy Lu Lu Mai
Jonathan Manjarrez
Rachel Martell
Sophia May
Markia A McClellan
Jasmine Miller

MSW Candidates Continued

Harrison Michael Mitsanas

Noah Mondschein

Maria D Montoya

Sarah Mosdby

Bashenyi Teddy Neema

Austin C Nico

Savannah Nieshe

HP Parrie

Courtney Parry

Jada Peten

Dennis Planaj

Buffalo Heart Woman Poor Bear

Dominique Prothro

Isabel J Quinones

Chandler Frances Riley

Riley E Kramlich

Biira Robinah

Willow Kathryn Rosen

Elaine M Schmidt

Yili Shen

Gabbie R Skapof

Liz Smith

Emma K Sparks

Chujin Sun

Lucie Taylor

Serena Taylor

Tori Trammell

Cate VanSchaik

Arianna M Varela

Isabel Venteicher

Honglei Wang

Emma Wennemann

Rachel K West

Michael L Williams

GP Worley

Lin Wu

Michelle Wu

Haorui Zhang

Jun Zhao

Peilin Zuo

MSP Candidates

Ashley Antony

Victoria Cichelero

Francis Goebel

Emily Gonzalez

Regina Gonzalez Orijel

Kathryn Hauver

Anderson Kimball

Kathleen Lamar

Lauren McQuade

Carrie Morgan Ritchie

Paul Scott

Jenna Sierra

Ziang Wang

Heaven Watkins

MSW/MBA Candidates

Maya Holmes
Makiyah Murray

Xiaoyu Wang

MSW/MPH Candidates

Sam Battaglia
Isheeta Gupta
Yu-Tsen Pai
Yilin Wang
Yuxiao Wang
Bowen Wu

MSW/MSP Candidate

Kotomi Yokokura

Phi Alpha Honor Society for Social Work Inductees

Ethan Fudge
Mary Hamilton
Hannah Jumper
Mary Kelly

Aliza Kleinberg
Arianna Varela
GP Worley
Kotomi Yokokura

Brown School



Featured Speakers

Liz Smith, MSW '26

Liz Smith is completing her Master of Social Work with a concentration in mental health and specialization in older adults and aging societies, building on a professional background rooted in direct care and community-based support. Liz has worked in residential settings supporting adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, bringing both clinical insight and lived experience into her practice.



As an informal caregiver from a young age, her commitment to this work is deeply personal and grounded in a longstanding dedication to supporting individuals and families through complex care needs.

Her interests center on caregiver stress, and the emotional and ethical complexities that arise in serious illness and late-life decision-making. She has a strong interest in how systems, policies, and clinical practices shape experiences at the end of life, particularly in relation to autonomy, dignity, and access to compassionate care.

Liz is passionate about improving support for individuals nearing the end of life and the caregivers who walk alongside them. She is passionate about advancing approaches that integrate emotional, relational, and practical care, while also addressing gaps in systems that often leave families without adequate guidance or resources.

Following graduation, she plans to pursue her doctoral training focused on social work dissemination and implementation at the Brown School, with the goal of strengthening how evidence-based practices in caregiving are translated into real-world settings. Her long-term aim is to contribute to policy and program development that ensures individuals and families are supported with dignity, clarity, and compassion throughout the life course.

Jason Q. Purnell, PhD, MPH

Dr. Jason Purnell joined the James S. McDonnell Foundation as President & CEO in 2023 after leading the community health improvement strategy at BJC HealthCare. He created health equity programs with colleagues and partners and introduced an anchor institution agenda focused on investments in economic opportunity for historically excluded communities. This work built on his scholarship at Washington University’s Brown School, where in 2014, he and his collaborators released the seminal “For the Sake of All” report on African American health in St. Louis, inspiring policy changes and programmatic innovations. Dr. Purnell’s BA is from Harvard, and his PhD is from Ohio State University.



Photos

Proofs may be viewed and purchased online within 72 hours of the ceremony from: sartiphoto.com

Click on “View Proofs” and follow the directions.

For more information, please contact:
Sarti Photo Services, 314.721.7733

Commitment to Open & Respectful Events

Washington University fully embraces a commitment to presenting a wide diversity of ideas and opinions, as well as encouraging free discussion of those ideas and opinions.

With this commitment in mind, the university agrees that event proceedings and guest speakers should expect to be heard without interference from or harassment by those who oppose their views or positions, and that posters, banners, noisemakers and other distractions should not be brought into the presentation area during a program or talk, so that an environment free of interference, distraction and intimidation shall be maintained.

The Washington University policy is: No placards, banners, noisemakers and other distractions are permitted in outdoor or indoor presentation areas on campus – either in support of or in opposition to speakers or event proceedings. Groups and individuals are free to gather outside of these venues and presentation areas to leaflet, to display posters and banners, to distribute literature and to express their concerns – as long as they do not obstruct entry, disrupt event proceedings, interfere with speakers’ ability to be heard, or otherwise deny the audience an interruption-free event.





#BrownGrad26 #WashU26