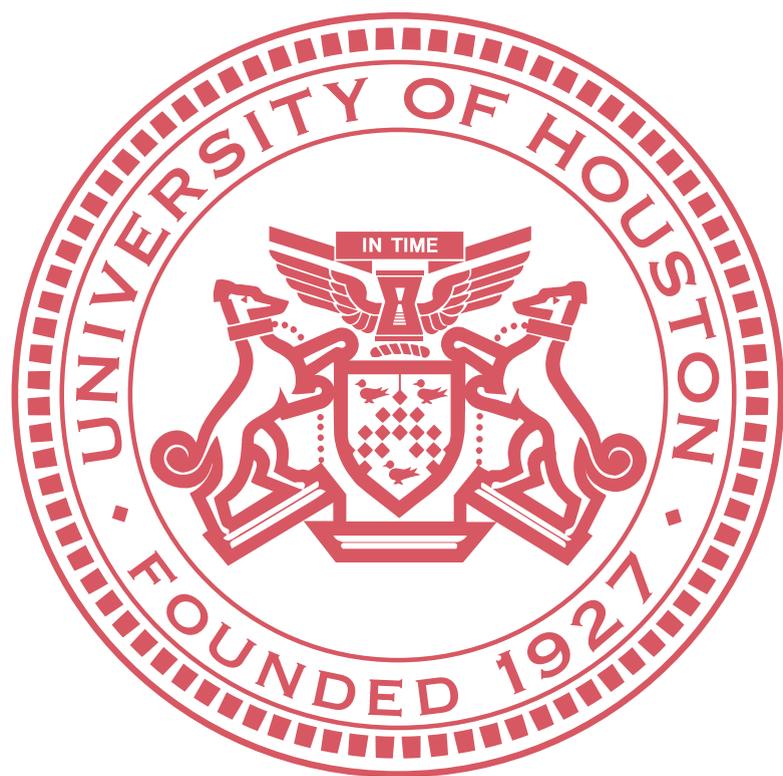


UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
Spring 2025 Commencement

**GRADUATE COLLEGE
OF SOCIAL WORK**

Wednesday, May 7, 2025
Fertitta Center





University of Houston
Graduate College of Social Work

Commencement Ceremony
Wednesday, May 7, 2025, 7:00 p.m.
Fertitta Center

Message from Renu Khator, <i>President</i>	p. 3
Message from Diane Z. Chase, <i>Provost</i>	p. 5
University of Houston System Board of Regents	p. 6
President's Cabinet	p. 6
University of Houston Deans	p. 7
University of Houston History	p. 8
Commencement Traditions	p. 9
Ceremonial Symbols	p. 11
Honorary Degrees	p. 12
President's Medallions	p. 14
Graduate College of Social Work	
Message from Cynthia Warrick, <i>Interim Dean</i>	p. 17
Order of Program	p. 18
GCSW Spirit of Social Work Award	p. 19
Commencement Speaker	p. 20
Graduates	p. 21
Alumni Association	
Message from Shazia Khan, <i>Alumni Association President</i>	p. 26





Message from the President

Dear University of Houston Graduates,

Congratulations on achieving this remarkable achievement. Today's graduation marks the start of a bright new beginning. Your longtime dream becomes a reality, and I join your family and friends in celebrating this milestone with you.

As you reflect on this moment, take pride in knowing it was your hard work, intellect, perseverance and belief in yourself that got you here. Equally important was the unwavering support of those around you. These values and connections have shaped who you are today and will propel you forward in your professional journey.

As you move ahead, remember the power of paying it forward. Be a mentor to someone else who dreams of achieving what you have. Moreover, remember to express gratitude to your professors, advisors, family and friends who supported you along the way.

The Tier One education you've received at UH has provided you with the tools to thrive. This is the home of nationally top-ranked academic programs, world-renowned faculty, an NCAA Final Four basketball team, cutting-edge research and industry leaders. I have no doubt that you will join the ranks of the many successful alumni who have come before you.

Congratulations, Coogs! The world is yours.

With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Renu Khator'.

Renu Khator
President, University of Houston





Message from the Provost

Dear Spring Graduates,

You've traveled a long road to reach this moment, but here you are! Congratulations on earning a degree from the University of Houston.

Whether you're the first in your family to graduate from college or perhaps a second-generation Cougar, today's ceremony marks a significant moment in your lives. It's also special for the University of Houston as your success has been our priority since you first stepped foot on campus.

Now, you embark on new journeys. Some of you may be entering the workforce. Others may be headed to graduate school. No matter your destination, please remember those who helped you get to this point.

Stay in touch with peers, professors and staff members and remind them that their guidance supported your academic journeys. Also, thank your spouses, siblings, parents, grandparents and others in attendance today for their daily inspiration.

Of course, be sure to truly recognize the one person responsible for today's celebration—you! You balanced classes, work, family and other obligations. It wasn't easy, but you did it. Now, you are poised to reap the rewards of a degree from UH.

Although you are leaving this wonderful campus, you will remain a member of our University family. You now carry the proud tradition of past UH graduates and will represent our institution in your professional endeavors. Be proud of your time here, and let others know that you are now and forever a Cougar.

Once again, congratulations!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Diane Z. Chase', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Diane Z. Chase
Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, University of Houston

University of Houston

Commencement Ceremony

University of Houston System

BOARD OF REGENTS

John A. McCall Jr., *Vice Chairman*

Gregory C. King, *Secretary*

Durga D. Agrawal

Tomas Bryan

Alonzo Cantu

Beth Madison

Jack B. Moore

Tammy D. Murphy

Ricky Raven

University of Houston

PRESIDENT

Renu Khator

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Diane Z. Chase

Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

Raymond S. Bartlett

Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance

Eloise Brice

Vice President for University Advancement and Alumni

Dona Hamilton Cornell

Vice President for Legal Affairs and General Counsel

Lisa K. Holdeman

Vice President for Marketing and Communications

Michael Johnson

Chief of Staff

Paul R. Kittle

Vice President for Student Affairs

Ramanan Krishnamoorti

Vice President for Energy and Innovation

Elwyn C. Lee

Vice President for Neighborhood and Strategic Initiatives

Holley Love

President, UH Faculty Senate

Jonathan McCullers

*Vice President for Health Affairs and
Dean, Tilman J. Fertitta Family College of Medicine*

Claudia Neuhauser

Vice President for Research

Eddie Nuñez

Vice President for Intercollegiate Athletics

Michael Pedé

Associate Vice President for Alumni Relations

Jason Smith

Vice President for Government and Community Relations

University of Houston Deans

Heidi Appel
Dean
THE HONORS COLLEGE

Leonard M. Baynes
Dean
Hugh Roy and Lillie Cranz Cullen
Distinguished Chair, and Professor of Law
UH LAW CENTER

Andrew Davis
Founding Dean
Cullen Foundation Endowed Dean's Chair
KATHRINE G. MCGOVERN COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

Xianjun Geng
Dean
Cullen Distinguished Chair
C. T. BAUER COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Christina H. Gola
Interim Dean
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON LIBRARIES

Jim Granato
Dean
HOBBY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Catherine Horn
Dean
Elizabeth D. Rockwell Chair
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Teri Elkins Longacre
Dean
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT SUCCESS

Jonathan McCullers
Dean
Humana Endowed Dean's Chair in Medicine
TILMAN J. FERTITTA FAMILY COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

Daniel P. O'Connor
Dean
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Patricia Belton Oliver
Dean
ACSA Distinguished Professor
GERALD D. HINES COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

F. Lamar Pritchard
Dean
Humana Endowed Dean's Chair in Pharmacy
COLLEGE OF PHARMACY

Dennis Reynolds
Dean
Barron Hilton Distinguished Chair
CONRAD N. HILTON COLLEGE OF
GLOBAL HOSPITALITY LEADERSHIP

Pradeep Sharma
Dean
Hugh Roy and Lillie Cranz Cullen
Distinguished University Professor
CULLEN COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Kathryn M. Tart
Founding Dean
Humana Endowed Dean's Chair in Nursing
ANDY AND BARBARA GESSNER COLLEGE OF NURSING

Michael Twa
Dean
Humana Endowed Dean's Chair in Optometry
COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY

Cynthia Warrick
Interim Dean
GRADUATE COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK

Dan E. Wells
Dean
Distinguished Professor of Science
COLLEGE OF NATURAL SCIENCES AND MATHEMATICS

University of Houston History



The University of Houston was established as the Houston Junior College in 1927. As the college grew, it prospered and officially became the four-year University of Houston in 1934. Two years later, the college attained land for a permanent campus, and in 1939 it constructed its first building, the Roy G. Cullen Building. The University became a state institution in 1963.

The University includes 14 academic colleges, one school, and the multidisciplinary Honors College that teach a wide array of subjects – from math, arts and engineering to law, pharmacy and business. What started as a campus with a single building has grown into a world-class university, offering 285 undergraduate and graduate programs to more than 47,000 students annually.

UH is a Carnegie-designated Tier One public research university, and its public service and community activities, such as cultural offerings, clinical services, policy studies and small business initiatives, serve a diverse metropolitan population. Likewise, the resources of the Gulf Coast Region complement and enrich the University's academic programs, providing students with professional expertise, practical experience and career opportunities.

In keeping with the University's commitment to excellence, UH raised the benchmark of academic achievement when Phi Beta Kappa, the nation's oldest and most prestigious academic honor society, awarded UH the approval to start a chapter. This designation welcomed UH to an elite group of the nation's most esteemed colleges and universities.

Commencement Traditions

Academic costumes of today have a history of nearly eight centuries. In medieval Europe, all townspeople wore long flowing robes and gowns. The materials and colors were governed by royal decree. Gradually, distinctive gowns were developed for the various professions, trades and guilds. Scholars wore robes and hoods to protect their shaved heads. Later, skullcaps were worn on the head, and the hoods became a cape that could be pulled over the head during unpleasant weather.

As additional universities were founded, distinctive forms of the gown and hood were adapted by their faculties for bachelor's (apprentices of the arts), master's (teachers) and doctoral (teachers who had completed postgraduate studies). When caps and hats came into fashion in the 15th century, the hoods became ornamental, draped over the shoulders and down the back.

The academic hat was first worn as a symbol of the master's degree and existed in various forms. The mortarboard style comes to us from Oxford University. When academic costumes came to America in 1754, styles were quite varied. In Europe, they still are; however, in our country, usage has been standardized by the Intercollegiate Code of Academic Costume.

GERALD D. HINES COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

Bachelor's Degree	<i>Tassel:</i> Violet
Master's Degree	<i>Hood:</i> Violet <i>Tassel:</i> Black

KATHRINE G. MCGOVERN COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

Bachelor's Degree	<i>Tassel:</i> Brown
Master's Degree	<i>Hood:</i> Brown <i>Hood (Music):</i> Pink <i>Tassel:</i> Black
Doctoral Degree	<i>Hood:</i> Pink <i>Tassel:</i> Red

C. T. BAUER COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Bachelor's Degree	<i>Tassel:</i> Dark Blue
Master's Degree	<i>Hood:</i> Drab <i>Tassel:</i> Black
Doctoral Degree	<i>Hood:</i> Dark Blue <i>Tassel:</i> Red

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Bachelor's Degree	<i>Tassel:</i> Light Blue
Master's Degree	<i>Hood:</i> Light Blue <i>Tassel:</i> Black
Doctoral Degree	<i>Hood (Ed.D.):</i> Light Blue <i>Hood (Ph.D.):</i> Dark Blue <i>Tassel:</i> Red

CULLEN COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Bachelor's Degree	<i>Tassel:</i> Orange
Master's Degree	<i>Hood:</i> Orange <i>Tassel:</i> Black
Doctoral Degree	<i>Hood:</i> Dark Blue <i>Tassel:</i> Red

CONRAD N. HILTON COLLEGE OF GLOBAL HOSPITALITY LEADERSHIP

Bachelor's Degree	<i>Tassel:</i> Navy
Master's Degree	<i>Hood:</i> Navy, Red and White <i>Tassel:</i> Black
Doctoral Degree	<i>Hood:</i> Dark Blue <i>Tassel:</i> Red

UH LAW CENTER

Master’s Degree *Hood: Purple
Tassel: Black*

Doctoral Degree *Hood: Purple
Tassel: Red*

**COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

Bachelor’s Degree *Tassel: Citron*

Master’s Degree *Hood: Citron
Tassel: Black*

Doctoral Degree *Hood: Dark Blue
Tassel: Red*

**TILMAN J. FERTITTA FAMILY
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE**

Doctor of Medicine Degree
*Hood: Kelly Green
Tassel: Red*

**COLLEGE OF NATURAL SCIENCES
AND MATHEMATICS**

Bachelor’s Degree *Tassel: Golden Yellow*

Master’s Degree *Hood: Golden Yellow
Tassel: Black*

Doctoral Degree *Hood: Dark Blue
Tassel: Red*

**ANDY AND BARBARA GESSNER
COLLEGE OF NURSING**

Bachelor’s Degree *Tassel: Apricot*

Master’s Degree *Hood: Apricot
Tassel: Black*

Doctoral Degree *Hood: Apricot
Tassel: Red*

COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY

Master’s Degree *Hood: Gold
Tassel: Black*

Doctor of Philosophy Degree
*Hood: Royal Blue
Tassel: Red*

Doctor of Optometry Degree
*Hood: Seafoam Green
Tassel: Red*

COLLEGE OF PHARMACY

Bachelor’s Degree *Tassel: Olive*

Master’s Degree *Hood: Olive
Tassel: Black*

Doctor of Philosophy Degree
*Hood: Royal Blue
Tassel: Red*

Doctor of Pharmacy Degree
*Hood: Olive
Tassel: Red*

**GRADUATE COLLEGE
OF SOCIAL WORK**

Master’s Degree *Hood: Citron
Tassel: Black*

Doctoral Degree *Hood: Citron
Tassel: Red*

HOBBY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Bachelor’s Degree *Tassel: Peacock Blue*

Master’s Degree *Hood: Peacock Blue
Tassel: Black*

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT SUCCESS

Bachelor’s Degree *Tassel: White*

Ceremonial Symbols



THE SEAL

Throughout history, seals have been used to authenticate official documents. The University of Houston and UH System seals both bear the Official Seal of Arms of General Sam Houston, as handed down to him from his noble ancestors. It includes the escutcheon in the center of the seal — consisting of checkered chevrons denoting nobility — and three martlets, gentle lowland birds that symbolize peace and deliverance. A winged hourglass is placed above the shield. Surmounting this is the motto “In Tempore,” meaning “In Time.” The greyhounds indicate speed of giving aid. The UH seal was first adopted in 1938 as the present campus was established. Although the look of the seal has evolved over the years, the first version was etched into the floor of the Roy G. Cullen Building.



UNIVERSITY MACE

The University Mace, which is carried in academic processions, is a staff symbolizing the University’s authority and unity. The tradition of the academic mace began in the late 14th century when two ancient instruments, the royal scepter and the battle mace, were combined to form a university president’s symbol of authority.

THE ALMA MATER

All hail to thee,
 Our Houston University.
 Our hearts fill with gladness
 When we think of thee.
 We’ll always adore thee
 Dear old varsity.
 And to thy memory cherished,
 True we’ll ever be.

Words and music by Harmony Class of 1942



Honorary Degree

NATHAN FOWLER, M.D.

Dr. Nathan Fowler, a distinguished alumnus, is considered one of the world's foremost experts in drug development for blood cancers. As chief medical officer for BostonGene, Fowler provides strategic direction to the biomedical software company, empowering it to advance precision medicine therapies for cancer patients. The award-winning company uses AI-powered solutions to provide clinicians with actionable insights, support personalized therapy decisions, expedite drug development and improve patient outcomes.

Prior to joining BostonGene, Fowler was a professor of medicine and director of the clinical investigational and translational research program in the Lymphoma and Myeloma department at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. At MD Anderson, Fowler focused on developing groundbreaking new therapies for cancer patients, which led to FDA approval of several novel therapeutic agents in lymphoma. In addition, he led the development of one of the first combination immunotherapy regimens for untreated lymphomas and is the primary investigator for the ongoing international phase III study with the combination.

A profound researcher, Fowler has published over 175 articles in peer-reviewed journals, numerous textbooks on innovative approaches to cancer therapy and is a sought-after speaker for high-profile conferences. He graduated cum laude from the University of Houston with a bachelor's degree in biology and a minor in Spanish in 1996, earned his medical degree from the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston in 2001, where he also completed his residency, and received fellowship training in hematology/oncology at both Georgetown University Hospital and MD Anderson.

Most impressive is Fowler's rich history of service and community engagement. As a student at UH, he volunteered to teach officers Spanish at the Houston Police Department. His fluency in Spanish — supported by his undergraduate minor — has become a vital asset in his medical practice, allowing him to communicate directly with Spanish-speaking patients, enabling more personal, effective care. Prior to his work in medicine, he served in the U.S. Army as a nuclear, biological and chemical defense specialist. Moreover, Fowler is the founder and president of the Halo House Foundation, a Houston-based nonprofit organization providing affordable housing to blood cancer patients receiving medical treatment. His nonprofit — which charges patients only \$20 per night for fully furnished apartments — has provided over 9,000 days of housing to hundreds of families.

The Doctor of Humane Letters degrees, honoris causa, given for exemplary service to the University of Houston or society at large, is the highest honor UH can bestow.



Photo by Louise Kugelberg

Honorary Degree

JULIAN SCHNABEL

A prolific and groundbreaking artist, Julian Schnabel is a world-renowned painter whose multidisciplinary work spans sculpture, architecture, furniture and film. Widely regarded as one of the most influential American artists of the last 40 years, Schnabel rose to prominence as a leading figure in the neo-Expressionist movement in the 1980s. He later became a celebrated filmmaker and continues to excel in both fields today.

An accomplished alumnus of the University of Houston, Schnabel earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 1973. He later became the first UH graduate to be honored with a solo exhibition at the University's Blaffer Art Museum.

His first major exhibition was a group of paintings at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Houston, in 1976. By the late 1970s, he was exhibiting at some of New York's most prestigious galleries, including Mary Boone and the legendary Leo Castelli Gallery. The strength of Schnabel's work lay in his use of preexisting materials not traditionally used in art making, varied painting surfaces and inventive modes of construction — breaking artistic norms of the time. His unorthodox approach helped revive painting in the United States and beyond during a period largely characterized by conceptual art and minimalism.

In the 1990s, Schnabel expanded into filmmaking, directing and writing “Basquiat” — a critically acclaimed film about the famed artist Jean-Michel Basquiat and New York's 1980s art scene. To date, he has directed six major films, including the acclaimed “Before Night Falls”, which earned Javier Bardem an Academy Award nomination for his breakout role. His 2007 film “The Diving Bell and the Butterfly” was nominated for four Academy Awards, including Best Director, and earned Schnabel the Best Director Award at the Cannes Film Festival.

Schnabel's paintings are housed in some of the most prestigious museums in the world, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; the Reina Sofia in Madrid; the Tate Modern in London; and the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris. A true visionary, Schnabel transformed the language of painting and paved the way for new generations of artists.

The Doctor of Humane Letters degrees, honoris causa, given for exemplary service to the University of Houston or society at large, is the highest honor UH can bestow.

CONRAD N.



FOUNDATION

President's Medallion

CONRAD N. HILTON FOUNDATION

The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, established in 1944 by hotel magnate and philanthropist Conrad N. Hilton, has long championed initiatives that alleviate human suffering and foster global goodwill. Hilton's profound belief in the transformative power of hospitality led to a significant milestone in 1969 when he donated \$1.5 million to the University of Houston to establish the Conrad N. Hilton College of Hotel and Restaurant Management — the first hospitality school in Texas. This foundational gift laid the groundwork for what has

evolved into the Conrad N. Hilton College of Global Hospitality Leadership, a premier institution in hospitality education.

Over the decades, the Hilton Foundation's unwavering support has been instrumental in the college's growth and success. The foundation has contributed substantially to the college by funding critical infrastructure, innovative programs, scholarships and strategic initiatives. Notably, in 2021, amidst the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the foundation bestowed a \$10 million unrestricted endowment to aid the college in navigating the crisis and continuing its mission of cultivating future hospitality leaders.

The endowment has provided critical operational and student support, including student scholarships, research funding, professional development training, library materials, equipment acquisition, staff and clerical support, and other key areas that enrich and enhance the college.

The foundation's commitment extends beyond financial contributions. It also provides strategic guidance to grow the world's only hospitality program where students work and take classes in an internationally branded, full-service Hilton hotel, which is also operated by the college. In addition, the Hilton company has hired thousands of Hilton College graduates who work in Hilton hotels around the world. Their enduring support has helped students — many of whom are the first in their family to attend college — become leaders in the hospitality industry.

Today, the Conrad N. Hilton College of Global Hospitality Leadership is revered globally as one of the best in hospitality education and research thanks to the enduring support of the Hilton Foundation. Since its founding, the foundation has awarded more than \$3.6 billion in grants, bringing hope, healing and transformative change to thousands worldwide. A profoundly benevolent organization, each year the Hilton Foundation awards a multimillion-dollar prize to a nonprofit leading effort to alleviate human suffering — the world's largest annual humanitarian award.

The President's Medallion is awarded at the sole discretion of the President to individuals and organizations that have distinguished themselves by their support of the University of Houston and the community.



Hewlett Packard Enterprise

President's Medallion

HEWLETT PACKARD ENTERPRISE

Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE) is a Fortune 100, global edge-to-cloud company advancing the way people live and work.

Headquartered in the Greater Houston region, HPE helps organizations connect, protect, analyze and act on data and applications, to turn insights into meaningful outcomes to thrive in today's complex world.

Named one of the World's Most Ethical Companies by Ethisphere, HPE is dedicated to offering IT solutions that help their customers and partners achieve their social impact commitments. In 2018, HPE made a transformative \$10 million gift to the University of Houston's Data Science Institute as part of a game-changing collaboration to increase innovation. The gift also funded a scholarship endowment and high-performing computing equipment to enhance data science research activities across all UH colleges. In addition, funding supports education programs for K-12 students, as well as UH students, faculty and staff.

In honor of their gift and extensive contributions, the institute was renamed the Hewlett Packard Enterprise Data Science Institute, which has become a central hub for data science education and interdisciplinary research at UH. The institute has expanded educational opportunities by offering micro-credentials and certificate programs in data analytics, artificial intelligence, high-performance computing and related fields, that are critical in today's industries. Students benefit from hands-on experiences, industry workshops and mentorship from HPE professionals who serve as lecturers and collaborators on real-world projects. This integration of academic and industry expertise ensures that graduates are well-prepared to meet the demands of a data-driven workforce.

Furthermore, the institute actively engages with the broader community by developing programs for middle and high school students, aiming to strengthen the STEM pipeline through project-based learning initiatives. These efforts help build a diverse and skilled workforce equipped to tackle future technological challenges.

Moreover, the partnership has enhanced UH's capacity to deploy data science tools to address major societal challenges in the health care, energy and smart materials sectors, among others. The enhanced computational power has enabled researchers to conduct advanced analyses and simulations that have transformed disaster response, advanced breast cancer detection and improved the diagnosis of lupus-related kidney disease.

By fostering education, research and community engagement, the partnership has positioned UH as a leader in data science and innovation, benefiting the University, Greater Houston, Texas and beyond.

The President's Medallion is awarded at the sole discretion of the President to individuals and organizations that have distinguished themselves by their support of the University of Houston and the community.





Graduate College of Social Work
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

Message from the Interim Dean:

Congratulations on your graduation today from the Graduate College of Social Work.

At today's commencement ceremony, we celebrate your hard work, dedication, and commitment. We honor your many accomplishments as Graduate College of Social Work students and acknowledge the support of your family, significant others, friends, and classmates who have helped you during your educational journey. We also recognize the outstanding GCSW faculty and staff whose expertise, encouragement, and support have contributed to your success.

This commencement ceremony marks the beginning of your career addressing some of the most pressing social issues facing our communities. You possess unique skills and knowledge that have prepared you to advocate for and serve those in need.

I, along with the faculty and staff of the Graduate College of Social Work, wish you every success in the coming years and we look forward to your continued involvement with our College and with our Graduate College of Social Work Alumni Association. Today, on your graduation, we honor you and wish you a successful and rewarding social work career.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Warrick, Ph.D.
Interim Dean

University of Houston
Graduate College of Social Work

Commencement Ceremony
Wednesday, May 7, 2025, 7:00 p.m.
Fertitta Center

PROCESSIONAL	Moore School of Music Candidates for Graduation Platform Party
CALL TO ORDER	Chiara Acquati <i>Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Development</i>
PRESENTATION OF COLORS	Houston Battalion ROTC Color Guard
NATIONAL ANTHEM	Moore School of Music
WELCOME INTRODUCTION	Cynthia Warrick <i>Interim Dean</i>
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND AWARDS	Ginger Lucas <i>Associate Dean for Academic Affairs</i>
SPIRIT OF SOCIAL WORK AWARD, NON-ALUMNUS AWARD	Interim Dean Warrick, <i>presenter</i> The Honorable Garnet F. Coleman, <i>recipient</i>
INTRODUCTION OF COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER	Interim Dean Warrick
COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS	The Honorable Erica Lee Carter <i>Former Congresswoman for the 18th district</i>
PRESENTATION OF PH.D. DEGREE CANDIDATES	Quenette Walton <i>Associate Dean for Doctoral Education</i>
HOODING OF PH.D. CANDIDATES	Dissertation Advisors
PRESENTATION OF M.S.W. DEGREE CANDIDATES	Associate Dean Lucas
CANDIDATE NAMES READ BY	Steven Parks <i>Lecturing Faculty</i>
HOODING OF M.S.W. CANDIDATES	Assistant Professor Jessica Bagneris Clinical Associate Professor Donna Amtsberg
CONFERRAL OF DEGREES	Interim Dean Warrick
CLOSING REMARKS	Interim Dean Warrick
ALMA MATER	Moore School of Music
RECESSIONAL	Moore School of Music



GCSW Spirit of Social Work Award
UH Alumni Association Foundation Non-UH Alumnus Award

THE HONORABLE GARNET F. COLEMAN
Texas House of Representatives

A State Representative for District 147 in the Texas House from 1991-2022, Representative Garnet F. Coleman has been a leader in the areas of health care, economic development, criminal justice, and education. During his

service, he was the Senior ranking member of the Public Health Committee as well as the Chairman of the County Affairs Committee.

Representative Coleman has been deeply committed to expanding access to health care for all Texans including serving as a member of President Obama's State Legislators for Health Reform, a working group of 32 state legislators dedicated to health reform in their communities.

His most significant legislative accomplishments include joint authoring legislation that simplified access to children's Medicaid for more than 600,000 children in Texas who were not enrolled because of bureaucratic barriers. He helped secure an increase of \$161.5 million for at-risk childcare services and joint authored legislation that created the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) in Texas, which makes low-cost health insurance available to more than 400,000 children from working families. Rep. Coleman also passed the Sandra Bland Act which included de-escalation training for officers, jail diversion, jail safety, improved data collection, and improvements to mental healthcare.

On two occasions, Representative Coleman was named to the Texas Monthly Ten Best Legislators List and in 2005 he received the Eli Lilly Reintegration Award for his efforts to increase services and decrease the stigma associated with mental illness. He has also been awarded the American Psychiatric Association Jacob R. Javits Public Service Award.

Representative Coleman was Chair of the Legislative Study Group, a non-partisan house caucus dedicated to the development of sound public policy, from 2003-2022. In addition, he has the honor of being a past chairman of the Texas Legislative Black Caucus.

Representative Coleman authored and passed legislation that created the Greater Southeast Management District, the Downtown Management District, and the Fourth Ward and East Montrose Improvement Districts. Rep. Coleman also joint-authored legislation during the 2017 legislative session which helped increase affordable housing units in communities of color.

Representative Coleman remains active in the Houston community. He serves on the advisory board of the Houston Children's Museum and the Ensemble Theater. In 1991, Rep. Coleman founded S.M.A.R.T. Kids, a youth development program that provides much-needed tutoring for inner-city students. Raised in Houston, Rep. Coleman attended Howard University in Washington, D.C., and graduated from the University of St. Thomas cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts in 1990. He also completed the prestigious Harvard University Senior Executive Program for State and Local Government. Rep. Coleman and his wife, Angelique, reside in Houston's University Oaks neighborhood. They have two children, Austin and Evan.



Commencement Speaker

THE HONORABLE ERICA LEE CARTER

FORMER CONGRESSWOMAN ERICA LEE CARTER is a dedicated advocate for children and community empowerment, inspired by her late mother, Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee. With extensive experience across federal, state, and local government, as well as the non-profit sector, Congresswoman Lee Carter has consistently focused on effecting positive

change through impactful policy-making.

From 2013 to 2019, she served as an elected Trustee for the Harris County Department of Education. Since 2020, Congresswoman Lee Carter has led initiatives on economic equity, voting rights, and budget management for Commissioner Rodney Ellis's Policy Division in Harris County Precinct One. Notably, she spearheaded the County's inaugural funding commitment to afterschool programming through County Connections, which saw its funding doubled in summer 2022. She also played a pivotal role in developing the resolution that established the CROWN Act as a countywide employee policy in March 2022. Most recently, the Congresswoman contributed to the design of an \$18 million Revolving Loan Program to support minority- and women-owned business enterprises (M/WBEs) which launched in September 2024.

Congresswoman Lee Carter began her career as a first-grade teacher in the Houston Independent School District. After earning her Master's degree, she served as a Budget Analyst for the Governor of New York, focusing on policies to enhance equity in education statewide. Her career further expanded in the Governor's federal advocacy office, where she addressed federal tax policy. In Texas, she was instrumental in expanding the Nurse-Family Partnership through state funding and successful legislative advocacy.

A proud graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke University's Terry Sanford School of Public Policy, the Congresswoman holds a Master's of Public Policy degree. She resides in the Greater Third Ward Houston area with her husband, Dr. Roy L. Carter, Jr., and their wonderful twins.

After the passing of her mother, Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, in July 2024, the Congresswoman was elected to serve Texas's 18th Congressional District in a special election. She assumed office on November 12, 2024, becoming the first daughter to immediately succeed a mother in the United States Congress. She served until January 3, 2025, completing her mother's term in the 118th Congress. During her tenure, the Congresswoman was sworn into the Congressional Black Caucus and became the 95th member of the Democratic Women's Caucus, voted on 61 bills including the trillion dollar budget, hosted a community federal job fair, co-lead legislation to combat human trafficking in school zones, and secured extended federal deadlines and resources to address environmental justice issues in Houston's Fifth Ward.

Congresswoman Erica Lee Carter is grateful to her husband Roy, 2 children, father, Dr. Elwyn Lee and brother Jason for their support.

Fall 2024 – Graduates

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

Rebeca Edith Amaya
Tanisha L.E. Belvin
Concepcion Raquel Camarillo

Mallika Choudhury
Jennifer Blair Coffin
Lexi Denbow
Brian Michael Dusablon
Ava Renee Garrison

Gabriel Grady
Sarah Elizabeth Martinez
Nancy L. Martinez Guzman
Tristen Chase Seagull
Ana Maria Strawn

Spring 2025 – Candidates for Graduation

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

John Edward Bickel
Mentalization Model of Resiliency for
Youth Affected by Intimate Partner
Violence
COMMITTEE CHAIR: Dr. Robin Gearing

Holly Davies
The Effect of Flooding on Mental
Health: An Analysis of Subgroup
Features Utilizing Multigroup
Analysis
COMMITTEE CHAIR: Dr. Susan Robbins

Elena Ionescu
Dementia-Friendly Communities
and Business Engagement:
Navigating Stigma, Building Inclusive
Environments, and Advancing Social
Work Interventions for Older Adults
with Dementia
COMMITTEE CHAIR: Dr. Monit Cheung

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

Maristel Cedillo Aguilar
Berenisia Aguilera
Allison Akard
Ayo Akerele
Joi Nikole Armstead
Rachel Leigh Babb
Carolina Nathalia Ball
Hannah Barker
Anna Bean
Tara Beck
Emily R. F. Beebe
David Beltran
Lauren E. Bigelow
Patricia Lisbeth Blanco
Leah Charlotte Blankenship
Ana Maria Bohorquez Salinas
Daryal A. Bond
Claire Michelle Brown
Tasia Brown
Ryan Paul Bruce

Jaclyn Elise Burgdorf
Giselle Locadia Burley
Temitope Zainab Busari
Ina Darlene Cannon
Madeline Elaine Carruba
Amber Lee Castillo
Douglas W. Cathey
LaKeshia Lynette Charles
Lisa Y. Chatman
Aproteem Choudhury
Asif Chowdhury
Jose Leonel Cisneros
Ivy Ivie Cocuzzi
Justin Collier
Cordelia Collins
Timothy Connolly
Carolyn Cooke
Jennifer Correa
Jazmin Patricia Cuellar-Robles
Penny Davila
Alirma Khadijah Davis
Michelle Anne Reyes De Belen
Faustino De La Cruz, Jr.
Hannah M. Drury
Leighton Eber
Jami Eckols-Leonard
Yuritzi Elizondo-Zamora
Andrea Mariela Escoto
Bryan D. Evans
Oluwadamilola Opeyemi Ezekiel
Brooke Ann Fisher
Abrianna S. Fletcher
Ismael Francisco Flores Guzman III
Victoria Marie Frutos
Victor Antonio Galvez
Iris Arabella Garcia
James Garcia-Prats
Gil Garza
Valeria Alejandra Garza
Jessica Ann Goede
Tracy A. Gordon

Areli C. Gonzalez Chavez
Andrea Nohemy Gonzalez Rojas
Chiffon Janell Goynes
Jessica Lynna Gregory
Raylon Garnell Haley
Andi Hamilton
David Xavier Hamm, Jr.
Torey Handy-Copper
Ashley Chauntele-Michelle Hardy
Kennisha Harris
William Henderson
Valerie Rae Hernandez
Molly Mae Hinkel
Jessica Sproull Howell
Lauren Elizabeth Huang
Miranda Hurtado-Ramos
Yolanda Ibarra
Masoumeh Jalali Javaran
Sami Jarbough
Luryn John-Miller
Alia Joi Jones
Quaniece Jones
Ta'Shay Shovonne Jones
Madalyn Angela Kaldenberg
Breonna Kerley
Aerial Whitney Kerr
Seongwook Kim
Ingrid Kocjan
Teandra D. Lauderdale
Yolanda Diane Lawson
Ruby Soo Lee
Tyler G. Lemmons
Bethany Lenhart
Grace Elizabeth Lynch
Mónica Pérez Martínez
Chris Michael McDonald
William Kofi McNulty
Victoria Grace Means
Evelyn E. Mejia
Alexandra Elizabeth Merrell
Gregory Neil Metcalf

University of Houston
Graduate College of Social Work

Commencement Ceremony

Brian J. Million
Megan L. Mistic
Yadira Molina
Claudia H. Montoya Salamanca
Ida Muñoz
Cassandra Elizabeth Najera
Sally Nguyen
Uwaila Oghosasere Okundaye
Olga Elvira Ordonez
William Erick Orozco
Natalia Palomino
Sadaf Patel
Sara Noemi Perez
Brittany Leigh Perez-Williams
Christy Phạm
Mary Pless
Uriah Powell
Leanne Marie Dawn Prendergast
Sofia Jasmin Price
Janay Prince
Jennifer Rangel
Meghan Reid
Olivia Reanna Reid
Cecilia Marisa Reynolds
Camelia L. Rezgui
Daniel Riojas
Anika Renee Rodriguez

Noe Louis Rodriguez, Jr.
Melissa Roman Salamanca
Sarah Elizabeth Rommel
Jaianna Na'lani Nicole Rubalcava
Natalie Grace Saenz
Akane Saitoh
Lorenzo Anthony Salinas
Christina L. Sanders
Mink Sandhu
Rachel Scharfman
Jennifer Schirmer
Suzy Seep
Bobbie L. Sessions
Keith Shoemaker
Heather M Sloan
Lauren Grace Snodgrass
Moya Anne Somerset
Jennifer Soto
Erin Ward Stanley
Raechel Stucky
Allison Taylor Sullivan
Lindsay J.H. Sumrow
Marsha Gwen Suttle
Sahnobiah Louise Dior Swaso
Christina Maria Tahtouh
Annsley Kay Tarver
Don'Nisha Viona Tate

Errol Aaron Taylor
Ashley Lauren Thiel
Abigail Marie Timmins
Taylor Alice Tolson
Drew Tonjes
Isamar Trejo
Heidi Marie Troche
Rebecca Eileen Turner
Fiama Villagrana-Ocasio
Felicia Mae Wagner
Janet Wagner Torres
Martheline Wallace
Lizeth Walters
Hannah Corrine Walton
Johnnie Clayton Ware
Amy S. Watson
Nicole Laura Simone Weary
Marshala M. Wilkins
Jessica Helen Bennett Williams
Alexis Raquelle Wilson
Irma E. Wilson
Deborah Meryl Wotring
Jazlyn Lakalia Nicole Young
Jonathan Zamudio Gutierrez
Sarahi Zaragoza Cardenas

Summer 2025 – Candidates for Graduation

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Alberto Cabrera
Exploring Mental Health Stigma
Associated with Obsessive-
Compulsive Disorder Subtypes in
Latino Communities in the United
States
COMMITTEE CHAIR: Dr. Robin Gearing

Alexandra N. Hood
Promoting Better Outcomes for Black
Girls with Systems-Involvement
and Police Contact through Positive
Childhood Experiences
COMMITTEE CHAIR:
Dr. Quenette L. Walton

Limor Luss Smith
Self-stigma in emerging adults with
serious mental illness: Development,
resilience, and mental health outcomes
COMMITTEE CHAIR: Dr. Robin Gearing

**MASTER OF
SOCIAL WORK**

Janet O. Adebayo
Emily Janet Alfaro
Yesenia Elizabeth Alvarenga
Zainab Arif
Kayla Sharde Armstrong
DeJa DeJung Austell
Candy Itzel Avila Pascual
Angela G. Ayala Leon
Christine B. Ballard
Jorge Armando Barron
Valerie Renee Beltran
Ardrienne S. Bradberry
Angel Nicole Bray-Chmielowiec
Meaira Bryant
Lillie Faye Caballero
Caitlin Callan
Sandra Tayde Camarillo
Emely Elizabeth Cardenas
Pablo Leroy Cardoza

Sydni Elyse Charbonnet
Madelyn Marie Cohn
Timothy Connolly
Evelyn Elizabeth Cruz
T'Ziah Money Denise Davis
Ashley Ellese Evans
Alexandria Nicole Flores
Cynthia Stephanie Galeano
Michael Garcia
Vanessa Garcia
Trina M. Gonzaga
Alyssa Morgan Gonzales
Alejandra Gonzalez
Taeiah Graves
Dejuanna Renee Greenhouse
Ashley Chauntele-Michelle Hardy
Jala Ann Ivory
Loren Jones
Emily Jung
Autumn Skye Lauener
Alma Lopez
Lorena Elizabeth Lopez

University of Houston
Graduate College of Social Work
Commencement Ceremony

Nancy L. Martinez Guzman
Sydney Rose Medina
Kathryn Ruth Melton
Kwi Cha Myers II
Lourdes Ocasio
Valerie Belle Provence
Tiffany V. Quini
Evelyn Annette Ramos

Paola Rojas Lara
Josephine Salazar
Sophia Rose Sanchez
Brittne Marie Sinclair
Grace'Lyn Semaj Stephan Small
Keva St. Fort
Candace Tavares
Sherita Thomas Craig

Dustin August Shane Tillman
Daniel Varela
Marleny Guadalupe Vega
Erika Villa
Katherine Francis Volrie
Farirai Isabel Walker
Rea'ianna Monea Winston
Ronaldo C. Youngblut

Commencement Scholarships

ANN PARHAM SCHOLARSHIP

Emily Jung

ASSOCIATION OF LATINA AND LATINO SOCIAL WORK EDUCATORS

Berenisia Aguilera

AUSTIN LEGISLATIVE SCHOLARSHIP

Drew Tonjes

BARBARA MCGINITY ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

Alexandria Nicole Flores

BARBARA & ERNEST HENLEY ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

Temitope Zainab Busari

C.F. REIBENSTEIN ENDOWMENT FOR SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP

Patricia Lisbeth Blanco

Penny Davila

Uriah Powell

CAROLINE M. GARCIA SCHOLARSHIP

Cecilia Marisa Reynolds

Rachel Leigh Babb

CHARLOTTE CAMPBELL SCHOLARSHIP

Drew Tonjes

CHILD & FAMILY CENTER FOR INNOVATIVE RESEARCH AWARD

Alexandra N. Hood

Elena Ionescu

Jazlyn Lakalia Nicole Young

CHILD WELFARE EDUCATION PROJECT (CWEP) STIPEND

LaKeshia Lynette Charles

Lisa Y. Chatman

Carolyn Cooke

Iris Arabella Garcia

Jessica Lynna Gregory

Don'Nisha Viona Tate

Felicia Mae Wagner

DR. BARBARA G. (BOBBI) AND MR. J. VICTOR (VIC) SAMUELS DAC ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

Joi Nikole Armstead

DeJa DeJung Austell

Rachel Leigh Babb

David Beltran

Patricia Lisbeth Blanco

Leah Charlotte Blankenship

Temitope Zainab Busari

Sandra Tayde Camarillo

Ina Darlene Cannon

T'Ziah Money Denise Davis

Leighton Eber

Taeiah Graves

Quaniece Jones

Emily Jung

Teandra D. Lauderdale

Alexandra Elizabeth Merrell

Uriah Powell

Akane Saitoh

Jennifer Schirmer

Suzy Seep

Grace'Lyn Semaj Stephan Small

Lauren Grace Snodgrass

Raechel Stucky

Sahnobiah Louise Dior Swaso

Candace Tavares

Drew Tonjes

Erika Villa

Martheline Wallace

Alexis Raquelle Wilson

EXECUTIVE & PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOUSTON SCHOLARSHIP

Jazlyn Lakalia Nicole Young

FERNANDO J. ZUNIGA Y RIVERO DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP

Elena Ionescu

GEORGE FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP

Tara Beck

Asif Chowdhury

Ta'Shay Shovonne Jones

Berenisia Aguilera

Faustino De La Cruz, Jr.

Luryn John-Miller

Victoria Grace Means

Sadaf Patel

Christy Pham

Janay Prince

Natalie Grace Saenz

Rachel Scharfman

Allison Taylor Sullivan

Errol Aaron Taylor

GEORGE W. MAGNER ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP IN SOCIAL WORK

Lexi Denbow

Jennifer Schirmer

**GLOBAL LEADERS OF BEHAVIORAL-HEALTH
EDUCATION (GLOBE) STIPEND**

Ayo Akerele
Emily Janet Alfaro
Tanisha L.E. Belvin
Ardrienne S. Bradberry
Claire Michelle Brown
Ina Darlene Cannon
Sydni Elyse Charbonnet
Mallika Choudhury
Justin Collier
Abrianna S. Fletcher
Cynthia Stephanie Galeano
Ava Renee Garrison
Luryn John-Miller
Breonna Kerley
Ida Muñoz
Evelyn Annette Ramos
Olivia Reanna Reid
Natalie Grace Saenz
Christina Maria Tahtouh
Sherita Thomas Craig
Marleny Guadalupe Vega
Fiama Villagrana-Ocasio

IMA HOGG SCHOLARSHIP

Andrea Nohemy Gonzalez Rojas

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP

Berenisia Aguilera
Ana Maria Bohorquez Salinas
Elena Ionescu
Alia Joi Jones
Daniel Riojas
Meghan Reid

IRA C. COLBY SCHOLARSHIP

Candy Itzel Avila Pascual
Leah Charlotte Blankenship

JOSEPHINE STEWART SCHOLARSHIP

Valerie Belle Provence

LINDA K. MAY SCHOLARSHIP

Areli C. Gonzalez Chavez

LYDIA MENDOZA SCHOLARSHIP

Daniel Riojas
Erika Villa

**MAKING JUSTICE PROJECT LAB DISSERTATION
SEED GRANT AWARD**

Alexandra N. Hood

MARK MAGAZINER FELLOWSHIP

Emily R. F. Beebe
Tasia Brown
Ina Darlene Cannon

MH-RITES PH.D. STUDENT RESEARCH GRANT

Limor Luss Smith

MICHAEL AND VICKEY DALEY SCHOLARSHIP

Drew Tonjes

NASW GOSNELL SCHOLAR

Mónica Pérez Martínez

PHI ALPHA HONOR SOCIETY SCHOLARSHIP

Carolina Nathalia Ball
Alirma Khadijah Davis
Valeria Alejandra Garza

R. J. DEBOTTIS SCHOLARSHIP

Trina M. Gonzaga

RUTHMARY A. GOLDMAN SCHOLARSHIP

Masoumeh Jalali Javaran

SANDRA A. LOPEZ SCHOLARSHIP

Joi Nikole Armstead

STELLA L. ERHARDT SCHOLARSHIP

Kayla Sharde Armstrong
Sydni Elyse Charbonnet
Autumn Skye Lauener

**UH GCSW ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
SCHOLARSHIP**

Miranda Hurtado-Ramos
Allison Taylor Sullivan

VICKI TIDWELL PALMER FELLOWSHIP

Uriah Powell
Leanne Marie Dawn Prendergast
Candace Tavares

**WAYNE B. DUDDLESTEN, SR.
ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP**

Evelyn Annette Ramos
Rea'anna Monea Winston

**WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST
ENDOWMENT
IN GERONTOLOGY SW**

Giselle Locadia Burley
LaKeshia Lynette Charles
Sarah Elizabeth Martinez
Megan L. Mistic
Camelia L. Rezgui
Noe Louis Rodriguez, Jr.



Message from the UH Alumni Foundation Board President

Let me be the first to welcome you to the UH Alumni Association. You are joining a global network of over 305,000 Cougars. With your participation, we can only grow stronger. As you embark on this next chapter, know that your Alumni Association is here to help you stay connected with your beloved alma mater. From volunteering at an event, joining an Association or Network, signing on to UH Link, to becoming a

Life Member, the opportunities to engage are endless.

Please scan the QR code below to enjoy all the activities that soon await you. In the meantime, savor this moment and continue to soar.

True we'll ever be and Go Coogs!

Shazia Khan

Shazia Khan ('84)
UH Alumni Association Foundation Board President

**Have You Completed
Your Alumni Checklist?**



<https://houstonalumni.com/recent-grads/>

