



Austin Campus Center COMMENCEMENT 2025

Friday, October 24th 7 p.m. – 8 p.m.

The Austin Stone Church

9001 N. FM 620 | Austin, TX 78726





Founded in 1875 in Parkville, Mo., a suburb of Kansas City, Park University is a comprehensive, independent institution that is a national leader in higher education. In 2000, Park achieved university status and currently serves more than 5,700 students at 21 campuses in 15 states and online, including campuses in Parkville and Independence, Mo.; Gilbert, Ariz.; Barstow, Calif.; Columbus, Ohio; Austin and El Paso, Texas; and at 14 military installations across the country.

Serving an ethnically diverse student population and non-traditional adult learners has, for many years, been central to Park's educational mission. Even in its first year, Park University enrolled women students as well as men, something that was unusual at the time; and two of the original 17 students were Native Americans. Park was also an early integrator when it welcomed African-American students to live in Park's residence halls in the 1950s.

Park continues to increase access to higher education by offering the quality undergraduate and graduate degrees students desire at locations, times and delivery formats that best serve their needs. The University has been ranked among the top private colleges/universities in the country for adult learners, as well as for annual return on investment, and it is consistently ranked among the top least expensive private schools in the country.

Providing such access has developed considerable diversity among the student population, with more than 500 international students from 70 countries, and a 60 percent student representation from racial, ethnic and cultural groups typically underrepresented in colleges and universities. In addition, extracurricular activities and championship-caliber athletic programs (NAIA) complement Park's outstanding scholastic programs at its Parkville and Gilbert campuses.

Park University offers numerous degree programs online, and it maintains a long-standing relationship with the U.S. military for which it has been recognized as one of the largest providers of online undergraduate education to military learners worldwide. Since 2009, Park has received international recognition by various military-related publications as a top military friendly college/university. In addition, Park is among the top-ranked "best for vets" private college/university in the country.

MISSION STATEMENT

Park University offers access to a transformative education that equips learners to realize their individual purpose, navigate their professional journeys, and thrive through purposeful work.

VISION STATEMENT

Park University will be nationally recognized for a distinctive model that integrates students' real lives into the classroom, prioritizes real learning through career-integrated pathways, and equips students to drive real impact in their communities.

CORE VALUES

PURPOSE

We empower students and each other to discover and pursue meaningful paths.

BELONGING

We create a supportive community where all voices, from our local community to the global village, matter and all are treated with civility and respect.

INTEGRITY

We act with honesty, transparency and trust.

EXCELLENCE

We pursue the highest standards in teaching, learning, leadership and service.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Park University Class of 2025,

As we celebrate the culmination of your academic journey at Park University, it is my honor to extend heartfelt congratulations to each of you. Today marks a significant milestone in your lives, and I am immensely proud of your dedication and perseverance to reach this momentous occasion. Your achievements reflect your individual efforts and contribute to the rich legacy of excellence that defines Park University.

Looking ahead, I am thrilled to share that as you step into the next chapter of your lives, you do so during a remarkable time in Park's history. In 2025, Park University celebrates its 150th anniversary. This extraordinary milestone underscores the enduring commitment to education and community at our institution's core since its inception in 1875. After you cross the Commencement stage, carry with you the values and knowledge you have gained here, and let them guide you in positively impacting the world.

As you transition from students to alumni, remember that your connection to Park University does not end with graduation; it evolves. You are now lifetime Park University Alumni Association members, joining a global network of accomplished individuals who share a common bond in their Park experience. Embrace this community, stay connected and continue to make us proud with your accomplishments.

I extend my warmest wishes for your continued personal and professional success. May your journey be filled with purpose, growth and meaningful contributions to your communities and the world.

Congratulations,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathrine B. Swanson". The script is elegant and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Dr. Kathrine B. Swanson
President
Park University

COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES

PRELUDE	Candidates for Graduation, Faculty, Staff and Guest Speaker
INVOCATION *	Nicole Garza, Park Alumni
WELCOME	Cynthia Tafoya, Campus Director
COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER	Shawn Deabay Deputy Executive Director, Texas Veterans Commission
RECOGNITION OF STUDENT HONORS	Karen Evans
CONFERRING OF DEGREES	Christopher Schaefer & Cynthia Tafoya
OUTSTANDING GRADUATE RECOGNITION	Christopher Schaefer
BENEDICTION*	Nicole Garza, Park Alumni
PARK UNIVERSITY ALMA MATER	Cynthia Tafoya
RECESSIONAL †	Cynthia Tafoya

* The audience will please stand.

† The audience is requested to please remain in place until the academic procession has departed the Auditorium.

Please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices. Thank you.

We invite you to join the **#ParkGraduation** celebration on X (@ParkUniversity) and Instagram (@ParkUniversity).

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER

Shawn Deabay



Shawn Deabay was selected as the Deputy Executive Director for the Texas Veterans Commission in June 2019. In this position, he assists with the overall strategic vision and administration of the agency. He also develops policies, procedures, and guidelines establishing priorities to meet agency goals. Shawn directly oversees Communications & Outreach, Finance, Human Resources and Training, Government Relations, and Information Resources.

He has been serving veterans for the State of Texas with both the Texas Workforce Commission and the Texas Veterans Commission for over 25 years. Shawn began his career with the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) as a Veterans Career Advisor in East Texas on May 15, 2000. Shortly after, he became a Veterans Employer Liaison in 2003. In March 2006, he transitioned to the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) where he has held multiple positions.

At TVC, Shawn started as the Veterans Employment District Manager for East Texas. He served as a policy writer and performance analyst before moving up to Operations Manager and then Employment Services Director. From there he moved up to Division Director for Program Operations over multiple programs before being selected for his current position.

Shawn earned a National Employment Services Award from the Disabled American Veterans for his service to disabled veterans as well as receiving State Employment Awards from the Disabled American Veterans and American Legion.

Shawn earned his Master of Public Administration from the University of Texas at Permian Basin, his Bachelor of Science in Management from Park University, and his Associate of Science in General Business from Angelina College. He is a graduate of the Governor's Executive Deployment Program and the Texas Fiscal Officer's Academy. He served with the Maine National Guard from 1990 to 1992 and is a veteran of the United States Army from 1992 to 1998 before being medically discharged.

Shawn Deabay
Deputy Executive Director
Texas Veterans Commission

GRADUATE CANDIDATES

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES

Ameer Abdul	Master of Public Administration/ Criminal Justice Administration
Nicole Garza	Master of Arts/Communication and Leadership
Angelique Hamilton	Master of Public Administration/ Disaster and Emergency Management

COLLEGE OF MANAGEMENT

Nafiz Shahariar Apon	Master of Science/Information Systems and Business Analytics
Dawn Ashanti	Master of Business Administration/Marketing
Brittany Brown	Master of Business Administration/Business Analytics
Khaldoon Dhou	Master of Business Administration/Marketing
Angelica Espinoza	Master of Business Administration/ Management Accounting
Kennedy Kamithi Ibau	Master of Science/Information Systems and Business Analytics
Madison Peterson	Master of Business Administration/Business Analytics
Marion Rivers	Master of Business Administration/ Management Accounting
Heather Santana	Master of Business Administration/Project Management
Katherine Santana	Master of Business Administration/ Human Resource Management
Anita Solis	Master of Science/Information Systems and Business Analytics
Lashonda Troope	Master of Business Administration/ Human Resource Management and Graduate Certificate- Human Resource Management
Daniel Vega	Master of Business Administration/Management

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS

April Bonugli	Master of Education/Organizational Leadership and Adult Learning
Ray Garza	Master of Education /Teacher Leadership, Curriculum and Instruction
Jasmine Smith	Master of Healthcare Administration/General Concentration
Kaneisha Sora	Master of Healthcare Administration/ Human Resource Management

UNDERGRADUATE CANDIDATES

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES

Chandi Alamos *	Bachelor of Science Criminal Justice Administration/ Law Enforcement
Shawna Castaneda	Bachelor of Arts/Psychology
Natalie Chaparro *	Bachelor of Public Administration/Homeland Security
Peter Charles	Bachelor of Arts/Sociology
Tiara Davis Joseph +	Bachelor of Public Administration/Homeland Security
Brenda Govea	Bachelor of Public Administration/Public Service
Kelli Henderscheid	Bachelor of Arts/Psychology
Lindsay O'Connor o	Bachelor of Science Social Psychology
Rani Matti *	Bachelor of Science Military History
Devin Miller o	Bachelor of Arts/Psychology
Arlin Najera o	Bachelor of Science/Criminal Justice Administration/ Corrections
Ryland Ochoa	Bachelor of Science/Social Psychology
Alexandra Paige	Bachelor of Arts/Psychology
Crystal Palacios o	Bachelor of Arts/Psychology
Daniel Paz +	Bachelor of Science/Geography
Dontavius Peterson	Bachelor of Arts/Psychology
Briana Frausto	Associate of Science/Criminal Justice Administration
Yvette Montez	Associate of Science/Criminal Justice Administration

COLLEGE OF MANAGEMENT

Devon Anthony	Bachelor of Science Business Administration/Management
Nelson Cruz	Bachelor of Science Business Administration/Logistics
Alberto Fuentes	Bachelor of Science Management
Andres Garcia	Bachelor of Science Business Administration/Management
April George	Bachelor of Science Business Administration/ Healthcare Administration
Lafayette Halmon	Bachelor of Science Business Administration/Management
Ashley Henderson	Bachelor of Science Management
Brittany Herb o	Bachelor of Science Business Administration/ Human Resources
Monik Hicks	Bachelor of Science Management/Healthcare Management
Kami Huddleston	Bachelor of Science Business Administration/ Human Resources

COLLEGE OF MANAGEMENT *(cont.)*

Jeffrey Lashley +	Bachelor of Science Business Administration/Management
Jacqueline Leach +	Bachelor of Science Business Administration/ Corporate Financial Management
Jessica Mackenney o	Bachelor of Science Business Administration/ Human Resources
Alberto Najera *	Bachelor of Science Business Administration/ Human Resources
Alberto Perez	Bachelor of Science Management
Isaac Pifer	Bachelor of Science Information and Computer Science/ Cybersecurity
Nicole Rosales +	Bachelor of Science Business Administration/Management
Robert Schaeffer *	Bachelor of Science Construction Management
Kevin Smith	Bachelor of Science Management/Health Care
Ronaye' Smith o	Bachelor of Science Information and Computer Science/ Information Technology
Katrina Thomas	Bachelor of Science Management/Logistics
Imanie Tyson	Bachelor of Science Management/Human Resources
Anthony Vargas	Bachelor of Science Business Administration/Management
Christine Williams *	Bachelor of Public Administration/ Business Relations
Roneisha Clark	Undergraduate Certificate -Cyber Security
Daniel Paz	Undergraduate Certificate=Business Analytics

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS

America Ponce	Bachelor of Science Education Studies: Early Childhood Education/Teaching Young Children
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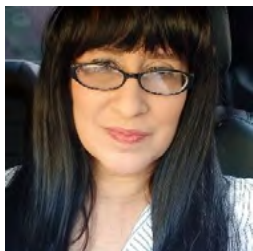


Honors Designation Key:

- * = Summa Cum Laude – 3.9 - 4.0 with 30 Park credit hours
- o = Magna Cum Laude – 3.7 - 3.899 with 30 Park credit hours
- + = Cum Laude – 3.5 - 3.699 with 30 Park credit hours
- ^ = Alpha Chi – Coeducational Academic Honor Society
- > = Psi Chi – International Honor Society for Psychology
- # = Phi Alpha – National Social Work Honor Society
- < = Honors Academy – Students complete academically challenging courses and a self-designed research project while participating in service learning; internships; prestigious off-campus summer programs; study abroad; and preparation for graduate study and careers. (The Honors listed are as of the program print deadline.)
- { = Mu Chi/Delta Mu Delta – International Honor Society for Business
- } = Pi Sigma Alpha – Political Science Honor Society
-] = Sigma Tau Delta – International English Honor Society

MESSAGE FROM

Cynthia Tafoya, Campus Center Director



Dear Class of 2025,
Congratulations on your graduation from Park University! I do hope that this milestone that you celebrate today is a self-reflection of the hard work and dedication that you have invested in yourself and are proud of. I wanted to leave you with some thoughts as you continue on your way.

Today your commitments do not go unnoticed! You were able to complete this education journey with an open heart, an open mind and genuine effort to prepare yourself for the professional journey ahead during extraordinary times. Your commitment has allowed you to build life-long relationships, broaden your view of the world and increased your awareness of the gift of an education. You have earned your degree! Earning a degree is not for everyone!

Today the value of your intelligence will change lives! You were able to grow in wisdom, trust in each other's point of view as a team and lead courageously with the best-calculated learning outcome of your constructed work. When in doubt, draw near to this mindset, it is a skillset well earned and it will differentiate from your peers. Lead with confidence for all the work you have put in over the years!

May the diploma you walk away with today lead you to generosity for the good of humanity and drive you to discover encounters in ways that you can serve others. May it empower you to lead others through your academic example and integrity. May it capture the joys of the day that you can finally say, "I did it!" May it remind you to stop and take a moment to express sincere gratitude of all of those who have inspired and supported you along the way. Let us not forget those who couldn't be with us here today.

Be proud of who you are today Class of 2025 a Park University Alumni!!!
Be steadfast for the extraordinary opportunities to come.
It has been a great honor in serving you!

Cynthia Tafoya
Campus Center Director
Park University Austin Campus Center

THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION WELCOMES YOU

On behalf of the Park University Alumni Council, I am thrilled to congratulate each and every graduate on a job well done! Completing a degree program is one of life's most challenging and rewarding accomplishments. Your investment of time and effort was worth it. The best is yet to come.

Today, a new journey begins: we are excited to welcome you into the Park University Alumni Association! The Park University Alumni Association exists to inspire passion and pride, and to promote continued participation with the University. We are here to help you maintain meaningful lifelong connections with other alumni.

As a member of the Alumni Association, you will have many opportunities to get involved in alumni activities and events. And while we'll reach out often to keep you updated, we also invite you to contact us. You can reach the Office of Alumni Relations by phone (816-584-6200), through social media (LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and more), via e-mail at alumnioffice@park.edu or online at advancing.park.edu when you want to get involved or need our assistance. We are always here to offer support.

Again, congratulations on this milestone. We are very proud of you!

Best wishes,

Phillip Reeder, '12

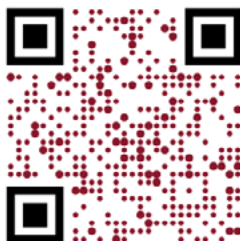
WE HAVE THE ANSWER TO YOUR NEXT EDUCATIONAL STEP

ALUMNI DISCOUNT ON GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN SPRING 2026

We are proud to offer Park Alumni an exclusive 50% tuition discount on all online master's degrees and graduate certificate programs for those who enroll as a new graduate student for Spring 2026.

SCAN >>

or visit park.edu/alumni-graduate-discount



Whether you're looking to

- Advance in your current field
- Pivot into a new career
- Increase your earning potential
- Deepen your leadership or technical expertise

Park is the right choice

- Streamlined application—you're already a Pirate
- Fast admissions decision
- Career-focused programs that work around your schedule
- Earn a respected graduate credential—at half the cost

Start on your schedule

Start in any of our 8-week online terms during Spring 2026:

- Spring I: January 12, 2026
- Spring II: March 16, 2026

Wherever you are

Park's online graduate programs are designed to fit your busy schedule and support your career goals—offering the convenience you want and the structure you need to stay on track.

**NOW'S THE TIME TO LEVEL UP!
MORE FLEXIBLE, AFFORDABLE, AND ACCESSIBLE THAN EVER.**

GraduateAdmissions@Park.edu
(816) 559-5625

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Mara Cohara, J.D.

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Weatherby Lake, MO

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Parkville, MO

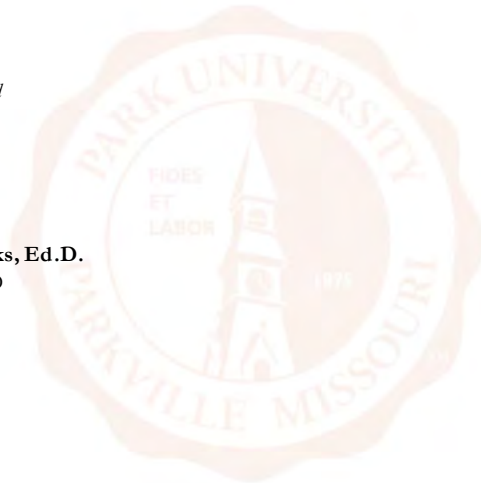
HONORARY TRUSTEES

John C. Brown

Kearney, MO

Gerald R. Moss, J.D.

Decanso, CA



PARK UNIVERSITY

CAMPUSES

More than 5,700 Park University students attend classes at one of 21 locations in 15 states and online from national or international settings.

Parkville (Flagship Campus)	Parkville, MO
Independence	Independence, MO
Little Rock Air Force Base	Little Rock, AK
Gilbert	Gilbert, AZ
Barstow Community College	Barstow, CA
Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base	Oceanside, CA
Moody Air Force Base	Valdosta, GA
Mountain Home Air Force Base	Mountain Home, ID
Malmstrom Air Force Base	Great Falls, MT
Holloman Air Force Base	Alamogordo, NM
Cherry Point Marine Corps Air Station	Cherry Point, NC
Defense Supply Center Columbus	Columbus, OH
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base	Dayton, OH
Beaufort Marine Corps Air Station	Beaufort, SC
Charleston Air Force Base	North Charleston, SC
Austin	Austin, TX
El Paso	El Paso, TX
Fort Bliss	El Paso, TX
Hill Air Force Base	Ogden, UT
Fairchild Air Force Base	Spokane, WA
Francis E. Warren Air Force Base	Cheyenne, WY

ACADEMIC ROBES AND REGALIA

The pageantry and color of an academic convocation come from medieval Europe where academic robes and regalia were adapted from Ecclesiastical garb. Most robes are black to symbolize the democracy of scholarship, since they cover any dress indicating social standing worn beneath. Bachelors' gowns are cut with long, pointed sleeves, while masters' gowns feature closed, slit sleeves. Doctoral gowns are full-cut with double-belled sleeves and bars of velvet trim.

The hood, originally a simple cowl attached to the gown, bears the heaviest symbolism of the academic costume. The bordering color indicates the field of learning in which the degree is earned. The square cap, or mortarboard, originated in the 13th century at the University of Paris and came to England in Tudor times. Round caps originally were reserved for doctoral degree holders. Doctoral tassels are usually gold, with other degrees represented by black. However, in recent years, tassels have come to match the lining of the hood to indicate the field of learning. The Honors Medallion symbolizes completion of the Honors Academy which involves independent development of projects with the assistance of faculty mentors. Alpha Chi is the highest honor society at Park University and encompasses all academic areas. The stole is worn as an indication of this recognition.

Art, Letters, Humanities _____	<i>White</i>
Business and Administration _____	<i>Drab</i>
Economics _____	<i>Copper</i>
Education _____	<i>Light Blue</i>
Fine Arts _____	<i>Brown</i>
Healthcare Administration _____	<i>Kelly Green</i>
Law _____	<i>Purple</i>
Library Science _____	<i>Lemon Yellow</i>
Music _____	<i>Pink</i>
Nursing _____	<i>Apricot</i>
Philosophy _____	<i>Dark Blue</i>
Physical Education _____	<i>Sage Green</i>
Public Affairs _____	<i>Aqua</i>
Science _____	<i>Golden Yellow</i>
Social Work _____	<i>Citron</i>
Speech/Theatre _____	<i>Silver Gray</i>
Theology _____	<i>Scarlet</i>

ALMA MATER

David Lueker, '47, arr. Dr. Roger Kugler





