

Kentucky Wesleyan College

One Hundred and Fifty-Eighth Annual Commencement



Saturday, May 2, 2026
10 o'clock

2026 Commencement Speaker and Honorary Degree Recipient

Doctor of Science (Hon Sc.D.)

Dr. Gwendolyn (Ford) Lynch '86



As a little girl growing up in Canton, Ohio, Gwendolyn Ford dreamed of becoming a doctor. When the time came to choose a college, she did her research and found Kentucky Wesleyan intriguing. She and her mother made the eight-hour trip to Owensboro in pre-interstate days, and they discovered that the long trip was worth it. The 90% acceptance rate to medical schools and the warm, hospitable atmosphere were appealing, and they both knew Kentucky Wesleyan College was the right place to begin the journey to achieving her childhood dream.

She describes her studies as extremely challenging but remembers that her love for chemistry grew under the guidance of Drs. Connor, Flachskam and Magnuson.

She also grew in her faith through the influence of the strong Campus Ministries program, and she thrived in many student activities and organizations. She recalls that through her KWC experiences, she gained a firm foundation for her life and career.

Dr. Lynch applied to and was accepted to three medical schools. She chose The Ohio State University and decided on the field of neurology her second year. She completed her internship at Ohio State, residency at the Yale-New Haven Hospital and fellowship at the University of Virginia.

Today, Dr. Lynch is a staff physician in neurology and a neurocritical care and stroke specialist at the Cerebrovascular Center, Neurological Institute at the Cleveland Clinic. She is an assistant professor of neurology at the Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine. She treats neurological and neurosurgical patients with conditions including brain hemorrhage, coma, out-of-control seizures, meningitis and encephalitis. Dr. Lynch is the recipient of three Innovations Awards for intracranial insertion of diagnostic and therapeutic probes.

Dr. Lynch is board certified in neurology, vascular neurology and neurocritical care. She has served as a professor of neurology at the Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine and the Rush University College of Medicine.

She was honored with KWC's Alumni Achievement Award in 2023.

Dr. Lynch and her husband, Darvin, a commercial insurance underwriter, live in Uniontown, Ohio, and have a daughter, Mariah, and son, Tarion John.

Honorary Degree Recipient

Doctor of Humane Letters (Hon L.H.D)

Keith Sharber



In making a career decision in early 1979, Keith Sharber thought Owensboro would just be a bullet point on his resume. Little did he know that Owensboro would become his permanent home. He married Owensboro native Vickie Richardson and started viewing the community as a perfect lifetime destination to raise his family and advance in his career.

A job in radio broadcasting brought Mr. Sharber to Owensboro. He spent eight years at WOMI/WBKR (1979 to 1987), first as a morning news anchor and then as news director.

Mr. Sharber left the broadcasting industry in 1987 and became sales manager for Canteen Service Company.

The Owensboro-based food service management company was poised for growth, and he loved being a part of a workplace family at a business that grew in leaps and bounds—both geographically (across parts of four states) and economically, with a peak of over 750 employees. From 2011 until 2021, Mr. Sharber, along with Jack Wells '77 and four others, was an owner/partner of Canteen and John Conti Coffee Company. The company was sold at the end of 2020 soon after Wells' passing.

The Sharbers became avid fans of Kentucky Wesleyan College basketball in the early 1980's. In 2012, Keith agreed to become the public address announcer at the Owensboro Sportscenter for KWC men's and women's basketball. He continues in that role today. In 2020, Mr. Sharber accepted an invitation to become a member of the Kentucky Wesleyan College Board of Trustees. His primary motivation in accepting the trustee position was to pay tribute to his late friend and business partner, Jack Wells, a proud KWC alumnus, long-time trustee, former board chair and devoted philanthropic supporter.

Mr. Sharber will become chair of the Kentucky Wesleyan Board of Trustees in June. He is also chair of KWC's Generations Capital Campaign and loves pouring his time and energy into a variety of KWC initiatives.

He was the recipient of a KWC Honorary Alumnus Award in 2023.

The Sharbers, both life-long United Methodists, are active members of Settle Memorial United Methodist Church. They enjoy time with daughter Nicole and her husband, Jorge, and son Mitch and his wife, Shanna, and grandsons Beau and Leo.

COMMENCEMENT PROGRAM

Pre-Service Music Various Selections
“Goldberg Variation, No. 30”
J.S. Bach
Sheperd Brass

Academic Processional*

Processional..... “March No.1 from *Pomp and Circumstance*”
Sir Edward Elgar
Sheperd Brass

Flag Bearers † Kai Landon Marchiony ’26
Marc Luis Stoever ’26
Lindsay Faye Creager ’26
Savannah Paige Jackson ’26
DeLaney Grace Brown ’26

Faculty Marshals † † Raju Chenna, MBA
Dr. R. Scot Payne, Ph.D

Order of Procession

Flag Bearers
Faculty
Graduates

Board of Trustees
President and Platform Party

Call to Celebration* Rev. Dr. Jim Coleman
Associate Professor of Religion and Director of Campus Ministries

Psalm 136:1-3 (New King James Version)

Thanksgiving to God for His Enduring Mercy

“Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good!

For His mercy endures forever.

Oh, give thanks to the God of gods!

For His mercy endures forever.

Oh, give thanks to the Lord of lords!

For His mercy endures forever.”

Invocation* Raffa Mirella De Leon Gano ’26

Choral Music “Hold Fast to Dreams”
Susan LaBarr
Kentucky Wesleyan Singers
Hadley Rouse
Choir Director
James Wells ’14
Pianist

Welcome..... James P. Cousins, Ph.D
President

Greetings Fred Wright ’80
Chair, Board of Trustees

Introduction of Valedictorian	Stephen Germic, Ph.D <i>Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs</i>
Valedictory Addresses	Kai Marchiony Marc Stoever
Introduction of Commencement Speaker	Mr. Wright
Commencement Address	Dr. Gwendolyn (Ford) Lynch '86
Awarding of Honorary Degrees	Dr. Cousins Dr. Germic Mr. Wright
Explanation of Academic Honors	Dr. Germic
Awarding of Degrees	Dr. Cousins Dr. Lisa Clark <i>Associate Professor of Music</i> Dr. Rohnn Sanderson <i>Professor of Economics and Director of MBA Program</i>
Welcome to the Alumni Association	Corey Gant '08 <i>Vice President, Alumni Association</i>

Singing of the Alma Mater*

On the city's southern border,
 Reared against the sky,
 Proudly stands our Alma Mater
 As the years go by.
 Forward ever be our watchword,
 Conquer and prevail,
 Hail to thee our Alma Mater,
 Wesleyan, All Hail!

Loyal be her sons and daughters,
 Ever in the strife;
 Always true to one another
 Till the end of life.
 Forward ever be our watchword,
 Conquer and prevail,
 Hail to thee our Alma Mater,
 Wesleyan, All Hail!

Ringing of the Millersburg Bell	Jenna Whitsell '26 <i>President, Student Government Association</i>
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Benediction*	Rev. Dr. Coleman
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Recessional	"Suite of Symphonies, Mvt. 1 'Rondeau'" Jean-Joseph Mouret Sheperd Brass
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***Please stand**

† Flag bearers are determined from the highest cumulative GPA and total hours accrued through Kentucky Wesleyan College at the end of the last completed semester.

† † Faculty marshals are the most senior full professors.

Sheperd Brass

Dr. Timothy Zifer, trumpet
 Mr. David Jarrett, trumpet
 Mr. Faril Bunner, horn in F
 Dr. Kenneth Steinsultz, trombone
 Dr. Patrick Stuckemeyer, tuba

GRADUATES

Master of Business Administration

Jalon Arcolon Baker
Tucker Gates Hagan
Jay Ross Jarvis

Bachelor of Arts

Carly Rae Embry
Laura Elizabeth Erxleben
Magna Cum Laude
Na-Shara A'driana Kimari Foster

Raffa Mirella De Leon Gano
Ellen Marie Gentry
Haidyn Renae Green
Magna Cum Laude

Drake Arthur Gunter
Magna Cum Laude

Gracie Taylor Higgs
Magna Cum Laude

Savannah Paige Jackson
Summa Cum Laude

Amber Renee Jenkins
Summa Cum Laude

Kathryn Lorraine Lee
Magna Cum Laude

Joshua Tyler Mahoney
Summa Cum Laude

Immigin Zoe Mann
Magna Cum Laude

Heather Paige Mapes
Cum Laude

Hallie Nicole McCarty
Dylan Wayne Oliver

Magna Cum Laude

Tori Leighann Phelps
Magna Cum Laude

Elena Nicole Smith
Cum Laude

Tyler H. Smith
Summa Cum Laude

Grace Elyse Stanley-Plunkett
Summa Cum Laude

Makyla Ashton Talbott
Magna Cum Laude

Harrison Byron Warfel
Summa Cum Laude

Bachelor of Arts in Music

Claire Elise Goodwin
Magna Cum Laude

Bachelor of Music

Joseph Lynn Howard
Cum Laude (also receiving Bachelor of Music Education)

Marissa Paige Todd
Summa Cum Laude

Bachelor of Music Education

Kaeli Ann Colbert
Summa Cum Laude

Bachelor of Science

Connor Scott Adams
Cum Laude

Taveris Kayvon Albury

Tessa-Jo Grace Allen

Paige Madison Anderson

Chloe Nicole Apple
Magna Cum Laude

Cameron M. Baker

James Andrew Baker

Reginald Carlos Barnes

Carter Owen Bischoff

Raelynn Gail Blanford
Summa Cum Laude

William Davis Brocato
Summa Cum Laude

DeLaney Grace Brown
Summa Cum Laude

MaryElla Elisabeth Brown

Miranda Joleen Brown

Emma Jo Buechlein
Summa Cum Laude

Adrien Jose Bullard

Allison Nichole Bunner

Jeanine Evette Burrus

Ashely Faye Butler

Reece James Carroll

Alexander Oryn Cartner
Cum Laude

David James Castleberry

Cole William Cawthorne

Grace Elizabeth Colvin
Carter Merico Contratto
Lindsay Faye Creager
Summa Cum Laude

Reece Zachary Davis

Mya B. Dean
Magna Cum Laude

Jacob Christopher Dilday

Jayla Lynn Ditterline
Cum Laude

Amber Michelle Dunn
Magna Cum Laude

Gabrielle May Dunning

Rhett Dysholm

Nathaniel Cole-Lee Dyson
Cum Laude

Cooper Sterling Eveland

Elizabeth Anne Filback

Michael David Frazier

Estefanny Marlen Garcia Martinez
Cum Laude

Taylor Anthony Garcia-Grisham

Whitney Michelle Goguen

Sara Elizabeth Green
Magna Cum Laude

Hannes Valfrid Viking Grönevik
Summa Cum Laude

Ilana Katherine Hall
Summa Cum Laude

Rachel Lynn Hall
Cum Laude

Madeline Taylor Hanshew
Magna Cum Laude

Meahel Heard Pitra

Adrienne Elizabeth Hewitt

Trenton I. Hildenbrand

Kaelin Michelle Hoagland

Ayden Davon Houston

Mehmet Fatih Huyuk

Cedric Maurice Jackson II

Havanah Noelle John

Rachelle Leigh Johnson

Vilborg Jónsdóttir
Summa Cum Laude

GRADUATES (cont.)

Bachelor of Science (cont.)

Sydney Eva Kennedy
Summa Cum Laude

Natalle Alexis Keown
Cum Laude

Dalen Paul Kimble

Dylan Maple Kirk

Estella Rose Kleffman

Dylan Arthur Lopic

Easton Lawrence Leech
Cum Laude

Hannah Nicole Long

Destiny Danielle Lopez
Magna Cum Laude

Mary Ann Lyons
Magna Cum Laude

Caleb Bryce Mackrey

Kai Landon Marchiony
Summa Cum Laude

Samuel Dexter Marsch
Summa Cum Laude

Dana Diane Marsteller
Magna Cum Laude

Hannah Marie Mason

Kennedy N. Matheis
Cum Laude

Haley Jo Matthews
Cum Laude

Baylie Tristan McCreary

Samuel Patrick McFarland

Drayden Isaiah McKerrow

Alivia Jane Middleton
Cum Laude

Jaiden Jequan Miller

Kaylee Marie Miller
Magna Cum Laude

Logan Andrew Molnar

Teresa Mondie

Myah Alyse Montgomery
Magna Cum Laude

Trenten Bryan Moore
Cum Laude

Jace Damon Moorman
Summa Cum Laude

Conner M.K. Murphy

Riley Kay Neal

Kayla Melanie Nunes
Summa Cum Laude

Evan Dale Oakley

Maci Jo Onstott
Magna Cum Laude

Carlos Yahir Ortiz Fontanez

Reagan Ruth Parise
Cum Laude

John Patrick Payment

Olivia Renee Gray
Cum Laude

Cole Tyler Peaslee
Cum Laude

Laura Elizabeth Pellerito
Summa Cum Laude

Colson Adam Perry
Cum Laude

Ethan Zoli Petrosky

Camden Clark Phillips

Monica Shanea Pitters

Matthew Jacob Plaisier
Magna Cum Laude

Armandas Plintauskas

Aven Chase Proffitt
Magna Cum Laude

Cyia Sunshyne Robertson
Magna Cum Laude

Claire Elizabeth Roush
Summa Cum Laude

Talayeh Renea Rush-Abbott

Harrison Luke Sallee
Magna Cum Laude

Jorge Sánchez-Ramos
Cum Laude

Olivia Marie Schmitt
Magna Cum Laude

Skyler Keith Sears

Avery Rian Shacklette
Magna Cum Laude

Haven Taylor Shaffer

Leah Snyder

Allison Bryn Sommers
Summa Cum Laude

Nicholas Alexander Steele

Morgan Elizabeth-Paige
Stewart

Summa Cum Laude

Justin Jared Stimpson

Marc Luis Stoever
Summa Cum Laude

Nick Henri Stoever
Summa Cum Laude

Ethan Scott Stumpe
Magna Cum Laude

Adryan Jerelle Taylor

Jayden Nicole Taylor

Zachary Cyrus Taylor

Rowan Javier Teran
Cum Laude

Wyatt Lee Thomas
Summa Cum Laude

Ashton Michael Todd
Magna Cum Laude

Isaiah Shawn Tomes
Magna Cum Laude

Haakon Tveraaen
Torvbraaten
Summa Cum Laude

Lauren Grace Troutman
Cum Laude

Joshua Ethan Tucker

Noah Owen Tucker

Skylar Lacey Tucker

Megan McKenzie Turner
Cum Laude

Yatziry Yatana Yamile Urrutia
Rabago

Pavel Mihaylov Valchev
Summa Cum Laude

Grace Argelia Vazquez
Rodriguez
Magna Cum Laude

Nicholas Lee Vincent

Blaise Christopher Wall

Nyree Renee Walton

Cailyn Reese Westerfield
Cum Laude

Jenna Kate Whitsell
Magna Cum Laude

Katelynn Rene Marie Whitty

Jacob Paul Wigger

I'Janae Williams

Brooklynn Alexis Wolf
Magna Cum Laude

GRADUATES (cont.)

Bachelor of Science (cont.)

Kirsten Marie Wolfe
Magna Cum Laude
Steeley Lane Walker
Cum Laude

Associate of Arts

Taylor Easley Straw
B. Alexander Sweeney

Associate of Science

Aja Brown

Ariunzaya Enkhbaatar
Emily Diane Goff
Addyson Shae Graves
Aylin P. Hatch

Academic honors are determined from the cumulative GPA of the last completed semester and total hours at Kentucky Wesleyan College.

HONORS

Alpha Chi National College Honor Society

Hannes Valfrid Viking
Grönevik

Olivia Marie Schmitt
Marissa Paige Todd
Haakon Tveraaen
Torvbraaten

Pavel Mihaylov Valchev
Jenna Kate Whitsell

Chi Alpha Sigma National College Athlete Honor Society

Connor Scott Adams
Chloe Nicole Apple
Raelynn Gail Blanford
Haidyn Renae Green
Hannes Valfrid Viking
Grönevik

Ilana Katherine Hall
Madeline Taylor Hanshew
Vilborg Jónsdóttir
Sydney Eva Kennedy
Kai Landon Marchiony
Kennedy N. Matheis
Myah Alyse Montgomery
Kayla Melanie Nunes
Maci Jo Onstott
Cole Tyler Peaslee

Lauren Elizabeth Pellerito
Colson Adam Perry
Harrison Luke Sallee
Jorge Sánchez-Ramos
Avery Rian Shacklette
Marc Luis Stoeber
Nick Henri Stoeber
Ethan Scott Stumpe
Ashton Michael Todd
Isaiah Shawn Tomes
Haakon Tveraaen
Torvbraaten
Pavel Mihaylov Valchev
Steeley Lane Walker

Honors Program

Paige Madison Anderson
DeLaney Grace Brown
Kaeli Ann Colbert
Mya B. Dean
Jayla Lynn Ditterline
Na-Shara A'driana Kimari
Foster
Raffa Mirella De Leon Gano
Haley Jo Matthews
Cyia Sunshyne Robertson
Olivia Marie Schmitt
Jenna Kate Whitsell
Brooklynn Alexis Wolf
Kirsten Marie Wolfe

The Order of Oak and Ivy

Kaeli Ann Colbert
Isaiah Shawn Tomes
Haakon Tveraaen
Torvbraaten
Grace Argelia Vazquez
Rodriguez

Rogers Fellows

Na-Shara A'driana Kimari
Foster
Raffa Mirella De Leon Gano
Estefanny Marlen Garcia
Martinez
Meahel Heard Pitra
Easton Lawrence Leech
Reagan Ruth Parise
Ethan Zoli Petrosky
Talayah Renea Rush-Abbott
Yatziry Yatana Yamile Urrutia
Rabago
Grace Argelia Vazquez
Rodriguez
Nyree Renee Walton
Jacob Paul Wigger
I'Janae Williams
Brooklynn Alexis Wolf

Military Service

Taylor Easley Straw

