

SAINT JOSEPH'S UNIVERSITY

DOCTORAL
Commencement



THURSDAY, MAY 15, 2025



MISSION STATEMENT

As Philadelphia's Jesuit, Catholic university, Saint Joseph's provides a rigorous, student-centered education rooted in the liberal arts. We prepare students for personal excellence, professional success and engaged citizenship. Striving to be an inclusive and diverse community that educates and cares for the whole person, we encourage and model lifelong commitment to thinking critically, making ethical decisions, pursuing social justice and finding God in all things.

The Commencement Ceremony

Thursday, May 15, 2025 – 1 p.m.

PRELUDE

Selected Works Crosstown Musical Services

PROCESSIONAL

Pomp and Circumstance (theme) Sir Edward Elgar
Crosstown Musical Services

Narrator

Lora Packel, PT, MSPT, PhD
Associate Dean, School of Health Professions
Professor, Physical Therapy

ACADEMIC PROCESSION

Grand Marshal

Lynda S. Lemisch, OTD, OTR/L, CAPS, ATP
Clinical Assistant Professor, Occupational Therapy

Marshals for the Graduates

Nathan Baird, PhD
Mark Brown, ThM
Sylvester Carter, MHS, PhD, CEEAA
Allison Dukes, PhD
Shoshanna Edwards-Alexander, EdD, MSW, LSW
Ann Marie Favinger

Anne Galgon, PhD
Jessica Joseph, PhD, BCBA
Barbara Kellar, PT, MS, DPT, Co-DCE
Michael Knapp, PT, DPT
Leigh Lappin
Sheetal Parikh, OTD, OTR/L, CAS

Andrew Peterson, PharmD, PhD
Theresa Rhett-Davis, EdD, OTR/L
Mollie E. Sheppard, EdD
Shalyssa Smith, EdD
Michael Thomson
Deborah Zayon

Marshals for the Faculty

Sarah J. Corcoran, OTD, OTR/L
Clinical Assistant Professor, Occupational Therapy

Emily R. Bubel, OTD, OTR/L
Clinical Assistant Professor, Occupational Therapy

Stage Party

Honored Guests
Members of the Board of Trustees
Members of the Faculty and Administration

INVOCATION

Pedro Tomas Pereira, S.J.
Campus Minister

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Sarah Mele, BA '27
English - Secondary Education

WELCOME

Jean McGivney-Burelle, PhD
Provost and Senior Vice President, Academic Affairs

VALEDICTORY ADDRESS

Kimisha Simpson, MS '16, EdD '25
Interdisciplinary Doctor of Education Program for Educational Leaders

PRESENTATION OF HONORARY DEGREE

Vijendra Nalamothu, PhD '11
Founder and Former Chairman & CEO, Tergus Pharma
Founder and CEO of ApoStrata
Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*

PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES FOR DEGREES AND AWARDING OF DIPLOMAS

James H. Carter, PhD
Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

Joseph A. DiAngelo Jr., BS '70, EdD
Dean, Erivan K. Haub School of Business

Joshua R. Power, BS '05, EdD '16
Dean, School of Education and Human Development
Associate Provost, Graduate Enrollment

Edward F. Foote, BS '87, PharmD '91, FCCP
Dean, Philadelphia College of Pharmacy
Associate Dean, School of Health Professions

Cathy Y. Poon, PharmD, H '16, FPPA, FCPP
Dean, School of Health Professions

CONFERRING OF DEGREES IN COURSE

Cheryl A. McConnell, PhD
President

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Cheryl A. McConnell, PhD

ALMA MATER

Sarah Mele, BA '27
English - Secondary Education

BENEDICTION

Daniel R.J. Joyce, S.J., BA '88
Vice President, Mission and Ministry

RECESSIONAL

Triumphal March Hector Berlioz
Crosstown Musical Services

THE PRESIDENT, BOARD OF TRUSTEES, AND FACULTY OF
SAINT JOSEPH'S UNIVERSITY
TO ALL WHO VIEW THESE PRESENT LETTERS
GIVE GREETINGS IN THE LORD

*T*oday, Saint Joseph's is honored to recognize Vijendra Nalamothu, PhD '11, for his distinguished career in the research and development of dermatological therapeutics and pharmaceuticals.

Nalamothu has spent the last three decades making a name for himself in the world of dermatological research. Before earning his doctorate in pharmaceuticals from the University of the Sciences' Philadelphia College of Pharmacy (now a part of Saint Joseph's University), he held several positions in research and development at a number of pharmaceutical laboratories. He began with a six-year stint at G&W Laboratories, followed by roles at Verion, Inc., Sanofi-Aventis, Dr. Reddy's Laboratories and Promius Pharma LLC. After completing his degree, he entered the C-suite as executive vice president and chief operating officer at Analytical Solutions, Inc. He branched out into the entrepreneurial space, serving as founder and chief executive officer of Tergus Pharma, a pharmaceutical company specializing in topical drug development. In this role, Nalamothu spearheaded the dermatological drug development process from concept to commercialization. His expertise spans novel dosage form design, topical drug product development, and clinical trials across multiple countries. His interests include development of topical drug products, developing new disease models in animals, designing proof of concept studies in humans, animal toxicology studies, human clinical trials, process scale-up and manufacturing.

In his 12-year tenure with Tergus Pharma, the company's growth led to the construction of a 100,000 square-foot manufacturing facility. In 2024, he stepped down from the position after a successful merger with MedPharm, and he currently serves as the founder and CEO of ApoStrata, a dermatological therapeutics company. Additionally, he serves on the advisory council for the nonprofit Advancing Innovation in Dermatology and on the North Carolina Board of Science, Technology & Innovation, a branch of the North Carolina Department of Commerce that seeks to improve the quality of life of people in the state by encouraging, promoting and supporting scientific, engineering and industrial research applications. Throughout his career, he has been a featured speaker at numerous international conferences, including the Dermatology Innovation Forum; the Drug, Chemical & Associated Technologies Association; and events with the Center for Dermal Research. He has contributed to several academic journals including *Clinics in Dermatology* and *Critical Reviews™ in Therapeutic Drug Carrier Systems*.

With great pride, the University honors Vijendra Nalamothu, PhD '11, with Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*, for his entrepreneurship and dedication to the fields of pharmaceuticals and dermatology.

VIJENDRA NALAMOTHU, PhD '11
DOCTOR OF HUMANE LETTERS, *honoris causa*

Citation read by:
Pardeep K. Gupta, PhD
Burroughs Wellcome Professor of Pharmaceuticals
Director, Industrial Pharmacy Laboratory

Degrees Conferred In Course

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Anush Abelian
Norah Alhebshe
Jocelin Joseph

Jessica Kaster
Faisal Malik
Mary Mwangi

Victoria Reed
Ryan Smith
Ninkka Tamot

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

LaChante Collier-Bacon
Matthew Crater
Laura Doerr
Kristen Goldberg
Samuel Gonzalez
Rosemarie Gregitis
Jordan Kapel

Ariel Lajara
Richard Levy
Theresa McFalls
Kalen McLean
Alisha Paine
David Parker
Senthamarai Ramasamy

Leah Recasner
Amy Romani
Sheela Shamsid-Deen
Kimisha Simpson
Caroline Stenson
Josephine Tingba
Horace Trent

PHILADELPHIA COLLEGE OF PHARMACY

Kevin Abraham
Ruth Abraham
Adetoun Adeniji-Adele
Sarah Ahmad
Laurie Alexis
Furkan Amin
Cole Anderson
Daniel Antonelli
Myra Anwar
Lillian Appiah
Naa Asare Akoto
Nadara Bacon
Simarjot Bains
Sidney Bannon
Miranda Barker
Jake Bernstein
Anaum Bhatti
Madalynne Burford
Maura Cantwell
Anthony Cao
Meghan Carbone
Tomas Celaj
Dawen Chen
Mindy Choi
Bryce Chopko
Tristan Colestock

Azuba Cruz
Rena Cuneo
Marguerite Danker
Jeffrey Del Rossi
Saousen Diaf
Dawson Do
Simran Dodhia
Jovina Fager
Tilka Fannana
Jacob Furmanik
Kermina Gayed
Johnatan Gideon
Izabella Giordano
Mary Girgis
Natalya Giroux
Conor Glass
Benjamin Halladay
Arshia Hallajzadeh
Gia Ho
Kelsey Hochstuhl
Jacqueline Hong
Sabhorak Horn
Matthew Huebner
Brigid Hurst
Alexis Hutzell
Colleen Huzinec

Justin Ibrahim
Alexander Israeli
Janice Jaison
Danielle James
Hanry Jiang
Anina Johnson
Margaret Jones
Ashley Joseph
Gabriel Kaamino
Simran Kaur
Christopher Kelly
Vincent Kelly
Ali Khokhar
Jenna Kim
Alexis Kingcade
Ian Kochanowski
Shruti Konala
Sruthi Lakshminarayanan
Hoa Le
Matthew Le
Sivhgech Lee
Tomiya Legaspi
Kevin Lin
Matthew Lor
John Lubinski
Alexis Lubonski

PHILADELPHIA COLLEGE OF PHARMACY *(continued)*

Janessa Maldonado
Kyle Masai
Mackenzie McCall
Trey McCollum
Julia McGoohan
Madison McPhillips
Evan Metzger
Anna Nahirnyak
Mariamol Nelson
Tracy Nguyen
Huizhen Ni
Kayla Nueva
Christopher Oh
Mahi Ojha
Chidimma Okafor
Sophie Orsulak
Adesh Pal
Sabrina Pallen
Michael Paolillo
Keya Patel
Komal Patel
Kreena Patel
Mira Patel

Ryan Patel
Shikha Patel
Shreya Patel
Abigail Petlyarsky
Kimberly Phan
Jamie Piliero
Divya Pillai
Tyler Pohlrig
Dylan Poris
Austin Pustizzi
Aaditya Rajagopalan
Merlin Rajan
Nadia Reyes
Luz Rosario
Leah Roy
Alexis Saladino
Mina Salama
Victoria Sam
Zachary Scuderi
Erin Seddon
Seharpreet Sethi
Muhammad Shahroz Ul Haq
Gwyneth Shermanski

Melanie Slowik
Haide Sorial
Lauryn Stark
Kavitha Sukumar
Lisa Sy
Ance Maria Thankachan
Christina Thomas
Michael Thompson
Diane Torregrossa
Kendra Visilias
Sophie Vo
Loryn Walker
Mario Wasily
Jessica Wilcox
Andy Yang
Charlotte Ye
Kyle Yetsko
Li Yu
Cindy Yuan
Annie Yun
Elyssa Zaccaria
Gina Zarzycki

SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Matt Nelson Bansil
Amal Benny
Anna Boesteanu
Victoria Burke
Gavin Carney
Sean Carr
Jennifer Costella
Lauren Cuccinello
Matthew De Jesus
Riley Defeis
Lauren Del Giudice
Alexander Dessoye
Angelina Dias
Dominique Dietz
Robert Fearon
Alexia Flores
Robert Giandonato
Andrew Gibson
Nacera Gomaa
Olivia Graves
Rachel Green
Alyssa Gregory
Lance Grosse

Franco Huynh
Olive Ihem
Alex Johnson
Daniel Kuo
Hannah Leszczynski
Meghan Lozuke
Mark Jefferson Magsipoc
Gerald John Manao
Mario Manjarrez Linares
Daniella Masone
Alyssa McBride
Patrick Meenan
Nhi Nguyen
Miram Omar
Bindiya Patel
Pooja Patel
Kerry Patterson
Marcela Pavon
Ashley Pazhukayil
Michael Perumattathil
Lindsey Phan
Gabriella Polera
Zeeshan Pothiwala

Jessica Rogers
Angeli Román Medina
Gisella Romeo
Andrew Rosamilia
Andrew Rush
Annamarie Savino
Kavita Shah
Reshma Shinde
Noelle Siekmann
Alexis Smith
Matthew Stoodley
Jennifer Sutorius
Xing Hua Swieson
Kaitlin Thompson
Miranda Thottam
Emmanuel Torres
John Tran-Dinh
Alivia Trimarco
Natalie Vaughn
Katherine Wills
Cassandra Yushchak

Pharmacists' Oath

I promise to devote myself to a lifetime of service to others through the profession of pharmacy. In fulfilling this vow:

I will consider the welfare of humanity and relief of suffering my primary concerns.

I will promote inclusion, embrace diversity, and advocate for justice to advance health equity.

I will apply my knowledge, experience, and skills to the best of my ability to assure optimal outcomes for all patients.

I will respect and protect all personal and health information entrusted to me.

I will accept the responsibility to improve my professional knowledge, expertise, and self-awareness.

I will hold myself and my colleagues to the highest principles of our profession's moral, ethical and legal conduct.

I will embrace and advocate changes that improve patient care.

I will utilize my knowledge, skills, experiences, and values to prepare the next generation of pharmacists.

I take these vows voluntarily with the full realization of the responsibility with which I am entrusted by the public.



Health Professionals' Oath

At this time, I vow to devote my professional life to the service of all humankind through my chosen health profession.

I will consider the welfare of humanity and relief of human suffering my primary concerns.

I will apply my knowledge, experience, and skills to the best of my ability to assure optimal therapeutic outcomes for the individuals I serve.

I will keep abreast of developments and maintain professional competency.

I will embrace and advocate for positive changes in health service delivery systems.

I take these vows voluntarily with the full realization of the responsibility with which I am entrusted by the public.

Awards

PHILADELPHIA COLLEGE OF PHARMACY

PHARMACY PRACTICE

American Society of Consultant Pharmacists Award	Kavitha Sukumar
Hyman C. Bogash Drug Salesmen's Association of Pennsylvania Award	Kevin Abraham
Cantor Family Prize	Cole Anderson
Margaret Mary Culin Memorial Award	Kreena Patel
Michael F. Dollarton Memorial Prize	Brigid Hurst & Nadia Reyes
Herbert L. Flack PSHP Commencement Award	Luz Rosario
Mr. Seymour Fox '36 Commencement Award	Michael Thompson
Joseph L. Garde Commencement Award	Myra Anwar & Shikha Patel
GlaxoSmithKline Commencement Award	Dawen Chen & Maggie Jones
Benjamin Greenbaum '38 Memorial Prize	Gia Ho & Jessica Wilcox
Theodore I. Goldblum Memorial Prize	Alexis Saladino
HVS Laboratories Commencement Award	Kimberly Phan
Kenvue Award	Danielle James
Wolters Kluwer Clinical Drug Information Award of Excellence in Clinical Communications	Madalynne Burford
Leonard M. Krusinski '61 Memorial Prize	Vincent Kelly
Olumfemi "Femi" Ogunkorode Memorial Award	Kayla Nueva & Diane Torregrossa
Pennsylvania Pharmacists Association Outstanding Pharmacy Student Award	Janice Jaison
The Irwin Reich and Judith Reich Memorial Award	Nadara Bacon
Warren Rosemarin Commencement Award	Colleen Huzinec
Albert E. Rosica Jr. Memorial Prize	Ashley Joseph
Sarah B. Shapiro Memorial Prize	Huizhen Ni
Dominic A. Solimando Jr., PCP '76, Professional Activity Commencement Award	Jovina Fager
Viatrix Excellence in Pharmacy Award	Maura Cantwell

PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES

Johnson & Johnson Award	Alexis Hutzell
Remington Memorial Prize	Gina Zarzycki

PhD IN PHARMACEUTICS

Rose Mary Battista, P '82, and Michael Hoy, P'81, PhD '88, Award	Saousen Diaf
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SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Johnson & Johnson Innovation in Research Award	Marcela Pavon
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OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Occupational Therapy Faculty Award	Lauren Del Giudice
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PHYSICAL THERAPY

William B. Inverso Jr. Award for Excellence in Physical Therapy Research.	Jennifer Costella, Robert Giandonato & Marcela Pavon
Packman Family Award in Physical Therapy	Jennifer Sutoriu
Margie Roos Physical Therapy Faculty Award	Emmanuel Torres

Honors Societies

ALPHA ETA NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

National Honor Society for Allied Health Professions

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Amal Benny
Anna Boesteanu

Lauren Del Giudice
Pooja Patel

Annamarie Savino
Noelle Siekmann

Miranda Thottam

PHYSICAL THERAPY

Victoria Burke
Lauren Cuccinello

Olive Ihem
Lindsey Phan

Andrew Rush
Matthew Stoodley

Jennifer Sutorius

RHO CHI

PharmD Honor Society

Naa Asare Akoto
Madalynne Burford
Maura Cantwell
Simran Dodhia
Natalya Giroux
Conor Glass
Benjamin Halladay

Gia Ho
Matthew Huebner
Alexis Hutzell
Colleen Huzinec
Danielle James
Anina Johnson
Ashley Joseph

Christopher Kelly
Mariamol Nelson
Huizhen Ni
Shikha Patel
Kimberly Phan
Merlin Rajan
Leah Roy

Haide Sorial
Lauryn Stark
Ance Maria Thankachan
Jessica Wilcox
Andy Yang
Gina Zarzycki



EXPLANATION OF ACADEMIC REGALIA

The first year in the academic life of Saint Joseph's College opened with a ceremony, the Mass of the Holy Spirit, and closed with a ceremony, a commencement exercise. In the years since, the academic year at Saint Joseph's has continued to open with a solemn Mass of the Holy Spirit and to close with a formal commencement. Thus firmly rooted in the history of Saint Joseph's, the ceremony in which you share today is part of a still older historical tradition, that of the medieval university, where as early as the 13th century, the awarding of academic degrees was attended with great ceremony and solemnity.

Today's academic procession replicates the march through the streets of Paris (or one of the other great university centers of the time) of the doctors and masters of the university, their somber gowns, brightened by the colored ornamentation of their hoods, testifying to their status as members of a corporate body, free of feudal controls, which alone possessed the right to fix the standards for academic degrees and licenses. Their gowns and hoods, practical garments designed to ward off the chill of unheated lecture halls and libraries and to provide adequate space to shelter books and manuscripts, provide the models for the gowns worn on ceremonial occasions by the professors and students of today.

The cut of the gown indicates the level of the degree. The bachelor's gown, always black in color, is cut simply, with long, pointed sleeves, and is worn closed. The traditional master's gown resembles the bachelor's except for the cut of the sleeves; these are quite long and cut above the elbow so that the lower part of the sleeve, closed at the bottom, hangs behind the wearer's arm or coat sleeve. Much more elaborate is the doctor's gown, embellished with velvet panels down the front and around the neck, and with three velvet chevrons on each of its bell-shaped sleeves. The master's and doctor's gowns may be worn open or closed.

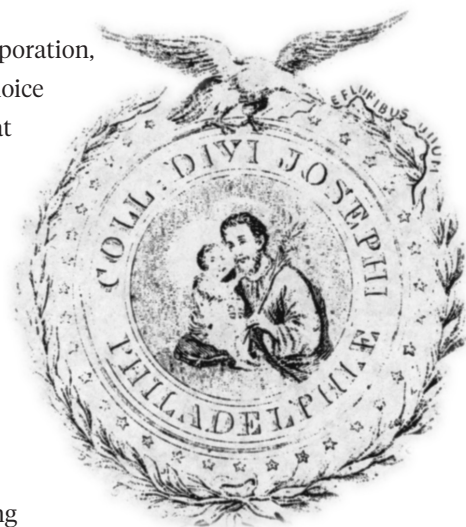
Hoods also vary in cut according to the degree represented: the bachelor's again being the most simple and doctor's the most elaborate. The hood is lined with silk in the colors of the university that granted the wearer's highest degree, and the color of the bordering velvet indicates the field of study to which the degree pertains.

— Attributed to Francis X. Gerrity, PhD, Professor *Emeritus*, History



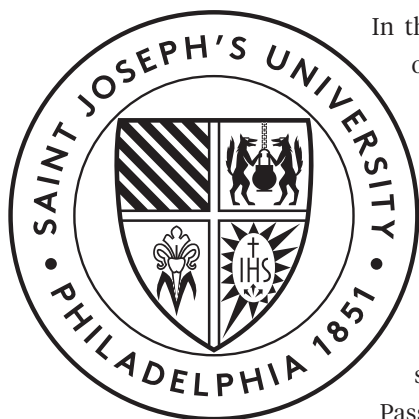
THE SEAL OF SAINT JOSEPH'S UNIVERSITY

The first seal of Saint Joseph's College, designed in 1852, the year of incorporation, featured a half-length figure of St. Joseph holding the Christ Child. The choice of this image for the first corporate seal reflects the founding of the college at St. Joseph's, the first Catholic church in Philadelphia, as well as the piety of Felix Joseph Barbelin, S.J., pastor of the church and founder of the college. This first seal was surrounded by one star for each state in the Union, a wreath of olive leaves and a bald eagle holding a banner inscribed *E Pluribus Unum* (Out of Many, One) at crest. The arms of the republic would have been important symbols for the new college to put forward, founded, as it was, at a time when the loyalty and patriotism of Catholics was questioned by Nativists.



By the turn of the century, the college had left the safety of the founding parish church, built a splendid new campus in North Philadelphia and developed a collegiate structure and identity. In 1903, John F. X. O'Connor, S.J., designed a new seal, more in keeping with the new collegiate identity. His design included most of the heraldic emblems, or charges, found in the modern shield of Saint Joseph's University.

The modern shield is quartered, that is, divided into four equal parts by a cross. In the upper left quarter, the dexter chief in heraldic terms, are 15 bands (bends): seven gold and eight red. The seven gold bands represent the seven sons of the House of Loyola: St. Ignatius and his six brothers. Red and gold are traditional as they are the heraldic colors of the royal House of Castille, to which the Loyola's were loyal.



In the upper right quarter, the sinister chief, is the coat of arms of the House of Loyola: two wolves at a kettle, said to symbolize the hospitality of the House. In the lower left quarter, the dexter base, is a lily, an iconographic attribute of St. Joseph, the patron of the University.

In the lower right quarter, the sinister base, is the emblem of the Society of Jesus. The letters "IHS" inscribed in a radiating sun at center are the Greek *iota*, *eta*, and *sigma*, the first three letters of the word "Jesus" in Greek. Rising out of the "H" is a cross, the symbol of redemption and salvation through Christianity. Below are three nails symbolizing the Passion of Christ.

The seal of the University is composed of the full heraldic shield with a periphery bearing the words "Saint Joseph's University Philadelphia 1851." The shield is used for institutional identification and ornamentation while the seal is used on diplomas, transcripts, and for the attestation of documents.

ALMA MATER

*Saint Joseph's hail! In song we praise our mother dear and fair.
In life's grim battle, we'll march on with Faith and strength to dare.
For valiant deeds make stout our hearts to prove your heirs are true.
So come rejoice and with one voice pledge loyal love to you.*

*Saint Joseph's hail! Our blood runs proud to hold tradition's fame.
For words of gold on history's scroll shed glory on your name.
To honor God, to love God's world, your champions for each fray.
Against the sky our colors fly, deep crimson folds and gray.*

Music: F. Edward Bigham '43 | Words: Robert F. McKeon, S.J.

LIVING INDIGENOUS LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Saint Joseph's University – Hawk Hill resides in the present and ancestral homeland of the Lenape. The Lenape, "Original People," inhabited the region for over 10,000 years prior to European imperial colonization and are considered to be the "ancient ones" or "grandfathers" by other Algonquin. With our acknowledgement, the Saint Joseph's University community dedicates itself to building meaningful relationships with Lenape and other Indigenous communities to inform the advancement of curriculum and sustainability practices that honor and uplift Indigenous knowledge and traditions.

