



2024

Commencement

Saturday, the Eleventh of May
Two-Thousand Twenty-Four
10:00 a.m.
John Hurst Adams Gymnasium

Dr. Ernest McNealey
President

Bishop Samuel L. Green, Sr.
Chairman, Board of Trustees

Commencement Ceremony 2024

Dr. Ernest McNealey, President

Presiding

PRELUDE

Dr. Alan Rudell and
Dr. Caleb Carpenter
Assistant Professors of Music

The Academic Processional

Pomp and Circumstance No. 1
Arranged by Sir Edward Elgar

Dr. Alan Rudell
Assistant Professor of Music

Posting of Colors

The Star-Spangled Banner
Allen University Concert Choir

Spring Valley High School ROTC
Columbia, SC

Pledge of Allegiance

The Audience

Welcome

President Ernest McNealey

Invocation

Rev. E. Robert Thomas
Allen University Chaplain

Choral Response

IV. Acclamation, from Gospel Mass
by Robert Ray

AU Concert Choir
Dr. Angela S. Blalock, Director

Reading of the Scriptures

Old Testament

Proverbs 4:7-13

Rev. Dr. Allen W. Parrott
Member, Board of Trustees
Presiding Elder, Charleston District

New Testament

Philippians 4:6-9

Mrs. Sandra Anderson
Member, Board of Trustees

Musical Selection

III. Credo from Gospel Mass
by Robert Ray

AU Concert Choir
Dr. Angela S. Blalock, Director

Salutations from the Board of Trustees

Rev. Dr. Norvel Goff, Sr.
Vice Chair, Board of Trustees
Presiding Elder, Edisto District

Senior Class Statement		Miss Marlaysia Westbrook Business, Education, & Social Sciences Major
Graduate Class Statement		Mr. Gary Dent Master of Divinity
Introduction of Commencement Speaker		President Ernest McNealey
Commencement Address		Bishop Samuel L. Green, Sr. Chairman, Board of Trustees Presiding Prelate, 7 th Episcopal District African Methodist Episcopal Church
Musical Selection	<i>Ride on King Jesus</i> by Moses Hogan	Allen University Concert Choir Dr. Angela S. Blalock, Director
Presentation of Candidates for Degrees		Dr. Lisa Long Provost and Vice President, Academic and Student Affairs
Conferring of Degrees		President Ernest McNealey
Conferring of Honorary Degrees		President Ernest McNealey Chairman Samuel L. Green, Sr.
Recognition of the Class of 1974		President Ernest McNealey
Induction into the Allen University General Alumni Association		Mr. Lamar Brown President, General Alumni Association
Announcements		President Ernest McNealey
Alma Mater		Allen University Concert Choir Dr. Alan Rudell, piano
Benediction		Rev. Dr. Caesar R. Richburg Member, Board of Trustees Pastor, Bethel AME Church
Retiring of the Colors		Spring Valley High School ROTC
Recessional	<i>Pomp and Circumstance No.1</i> arranged by Sir Edward Elgar	Dr. Alan Rudell and Dr. Caleb Carpenter Assistant Professors of Music
POSTLUDE		

COMMENCEMENT AT ALLEN

Commencement, the culminating exercise of the academic calendar, recognizes students who have completed academic requirements and satisfied other institutional obligations. The ceremony is marked by pageantry and symbols derived from traditions in European universities during Medieval times.

The Academic Procession

Begins with Senior Officers, Division Deans, Faculty by rank and seniority; led by faculty marshal Dr. Daniel Hembree. Members of the platform party include the Allen University Board of Trustees, the Speaker, Presiding Prelate Samuel L. Green, Sr., Mace Bearer Professor Abdollah Rabieh, Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs Dr. Lisa Long, and President Ernest McNealey.

The Presidential Mace

In Medieval times, the mace was a formidable weapon, held ready to protect an official who was taking office or opening his court. The mace was subsequently adopted as a ceremonial symbol of order and authority in European and American institutions. On the head of the mace are the armorial bearings of the lawful power and regal authority—the seals of Allen University, the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, and the state of South Carolina. The mace is borne by a distinguished member of the faculty who immediately precedes the President as he enters and exits the ceremony.

Academic Regalia

When European universities were taking shape, most scholars were clerics, and they adopted garb resembling the dress of their monastic orders, including variations in style and color. Caps and warm, floor-length capes with hoods were necessary because buildings were cold and drafty. American universities began the practice during the Colonial era; but in 1894, the American Intercollegiate Commission instituted a code of academic uniformity. The colors, designs, and opulence used in the robes, tassels, hoods, velvet and satin trimmings designate the field of study, the level of degree held by the wearer, and the institution from which the degree was earned.

Most gowns are black, but others reflect the granting institution's colors. The bachelor's degree gown has long pointed sleeves, is untrimmed, and is worn closed. The master's degree gown, worn either open or closed, has long crescent-shaped sleeves with a slit for the arm. The doctoral degree gown, which is frequently quite colorful, is faced with panels of

velvet, has three velvet bars on each bell-shaped sleeve, and the velvet back reflecting the color of the wearer's major field of study. The head covering is either the mortarboard or the Oxford cap, a round, soft, flat velvet hat. The tassel on the cap may be black or of a color indicating the degree. The doctoral degree tassel is usually gold.

The hood, which drapes over the back of the gown, is the principal indicator of the nature and source of the degree. The bachelor's degree hood is three feet in length with two-inch velvet side panels. The master's degree hood is three and one-half feet in length with three-inch velvet side panels. The doctoral degree hood is four feet in length with five-inch velvet side panels. Linings, which are exposed in the center of the hood as it lies over the back of the gown, indicate the colors of the degree-granting institution. The velvet trim indicates the major field of study.

Colors denoting specific academic fields, as established by the American Council on Education, include:

<i>Arts, Letters, Humanities</i>	<i>Journalism</i>	<i>Physical Education</i>
White	Crimson	Sage Green
<i>Business Administration</i>	<i>Law</i>	<i>Public Administration</i>
Tan	Purple	Peacock Blue
<i>Economics</i>	<i>Library Science</i>	<i>Public Health</i>
Copper	Lemon	Salmon
<i>Education</i>	<i>Medicine</i>	<i>Science</i>
Light Blue	Green	Golden Yellow
<i>Engineering</i>	<i>Music</i>	<i>Social Work</i>
Orange	Pink	Citron
<i>Fine Arts</i>	<i>Speech</i>	<i>Social Science</i>
Brown	Silver Gray	Cream
<i>Home Economics</i>	<i>Philosophy</i>	<i>Theology</i>
Maroon	Blue	Scarlet



2024 COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER

The Speaker

Bishop Samuel L. Green, Sr.

At the 47th Quadrennial Session of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church General Conference, held in Indianapolis, Indiana in 2004, Rev. Dr. Samuel L. Green, Sr. was elected and consecrated the 125th Bishop in the line of succession in the history of the Church dating back to Bishop Richard Allen. As one of the 21 active elected and consecrated bishops, he has served as the Presiding Prelate of the 7th Episcopal District - the state of South Carolina - since 2016. Prior to coming to South Carolina, Bishop Green led the 12th District - Arkansas and Oklahoma - from 2008 to 2016. In his first assignment, (2004-2008) Bishop Green was head of the 15th Episcopal District - Angola, Namibia, and South Africa.

The journey to becoming Bishop did not result from some supernatural act of God that compelled him to serve. It was a genuine understanding from a very young age that his purpose was to be a minister of the gospel. Along the way, Bishop Green pastored St. Mark AME Church in Orlando, FL from 1988 to 2004. Under his leadership at St. Mark, a daycare facility and family life center, which housed the church's preparatory school, were added, and ultimately named in his honor. He also held pastorates at two other Florida AME churches: Mt. Zion in Green Cove Springs and Mt. Zion in St. Petersburg.

While Bishop of the 12th District, he served as the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Shorter College in Little Rock, Arkansas, the only AME junior college. During that period, the institution was accredited by the Transnational Association of Christian Colleges (TRAC), and major campus buildings were remodeled and modernized. Upon taking the helm of the 7th District, Bishop Green became Chairman of the Board of Trustees at Allen University. He brought an understanding of higher education governance that lit the spark of resurgence at Allen. His vision of a "life of the mind and a life of the spirit" was realized in the Dickerson Green Theological (Graduate) Seminary, which necessitated the University pursuing and achieving a change in accreditation status from Level II to Level III. Other notable accomplishments were branches and fruit of this tree: associate membership and candidate for accreditation with the Association of Theological Schools, and the move from Level III to Level V to offer the Doctor of Ministry. His support for student life and appreciation of the HBCU-benefit were essential in the transition to NCAA D-II athletics and the return of football. Under Bishop Green's tenure as chairman the first system of shared governance began, financial strength and stability grew, the physical plant was transformed, and numerous awards and recognitions have been received.

Bishop Green holds a Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies from the University of South Florida, Tampa; a Master of Divinity from the Turner Theological Seminary, Atlanta; and the Doctor of Ministry from Columbia Theological Seminary, Atlanta. He is the father of three adult sons. In addition to a host of religious affiliations, he is also a 33rd-degree Mason; a member of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity; a member of Epsilon Nu Delta Mortuary Fraternity, and a member of the NAACP.



Candidate for
the
Doctor of Humane Letters

William (Bill) F. Stasior is a distinguished business leader known for his significant contributions to the consulting industry and his commitment to philanthropy. With a remarkable career that spans decades, Stasior has left an indelible mark on both the corporate and charitable sectors.

Bill Stasior's journey to success began with humble origins. Growing up in Chicago, he worked as a caddie, which eventually paved the way for him to become an Evans Scholar at Northwestern University. He graduated with a master's degree in electrical engineering from Northwestern, marking the beginning of his academic and professional achievements.

Stasior's professional career primarily unfolded at Booz Allen Hamilton, one of the world's leading consulting firms. Joining the company early in his career, he steadily rose through the ranks, showcasing exceptional leadership and strategic vision. In 1991, Stasior ascended to the role of chairman and CEO, where he spearheaded transformative initiatives that propelled Booz Allen Hamilton to unprecedented growth and success. Under his stewardship, the company experienced remarkable expansion, with annual revenue soaring from \$400 million to \$1.6 billion. His tenure was marked by a commitment to organizational change and innovation, cementing Booz Allen Hamilton's reputation as a global leader in consulting services.

Beyond his achievements in the corporate realm, Stasior is widely admired for his dedication to philanthropy and community service. Following his retirement from Booz Allen Hamilton, he assumed the role of chairman of the United Negro College Fund (UNCF), a prestigious organization that provides vital support and scholarships to black students across the United States. In this capacity, Stasior has played a pivotal role in advancing educational opportunities and empowering thousands of young people to pursue their academic aspirations.

Even in retirement, Stasior remains deeply engaged in various endeavors aimed at fostering positive change. He serves on the boards of prominent institutions such as the UNCF (*Chair Emeritus*), the Western Golf Association, and Northwestern's Kellogg School, leveraging his expertise and influence to drive meaningful initiatives forward. Additionally, he lends his strategic insights to several private companies, including OPNET, which was later acquired by Riverbed Technology in a landmark deal exceeding \$1 billion.

Throughout his career, William F. Stasior has exemplified of visionary leadership and unwavering dedication to social good. From his groundbreaking achievements at Booz Allen Hamilton to his philanthropic endeavors with the UNCF, Stasior has left an enduring legacy of excellence, integrity, and compassion.

2024 DEGREE CANDIDATES

DIVISION OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES

Bachelor of Arts in English

Quadaisha Brown

Jonathan Crawford
Joshua Poinsett, *Cum Laude*

Bachelor of Arts in Music

Ebony Dangerfield-Mobley, *Cum Laude*

Ja'mari Pratt
Khali Warren, *Cum Laude*

DIVISION OF BUSINESS, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration

Diquan Brown, *Cum Laude*
Chance Carter, *Summa Cum Laude*
Jayla Jackson
Stephanie McLeod - Akpalu, *Summa Cum Laude*
Isaiah Millhouse
Terrence Mills, *Cum Laude*
Christopher Smith, *Cum Laude*

April Stewart, *Summa Cum Laude*
Leyton Taylor, *Cum Laude*
Emmanuel Velazquez-Alvarado, *Cum Laude*
Raekwun Wallace
Tamia White, *Cum Laude*
Daamir Wilkins, *Cum Laude*
Omarion Williams

Bachelor of Science in Sports Management

Kailyn Glover
Javier Gonzales, *Magna Cum Laude*
Aloujuwan Jackson
Destinee Jamison-Whitfield
LaRhonda Johnson
Malik Lacewell, *Magna Cum Laude*
Sha'Keryah Passmore

Marques Sherman
Carlos Smith
Julian Smith, *Cum Laude*
Moise Toussaint, *Magna Cum Laude*
Marlaysia Westbrook, *Summa Cum Laude*
Dahlil Wilkins
Darius Williams, *Cum Laude*
Joshua Williams

Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice

Gary Bourrage, *Cum Laude*
Jalyn Brown, *Cum Laude*
Sheldon Brown
Kayla Chambliss, *Magna Cum Laude*
Brianna Green
Kristian Hickmon

Kiante Keith, *Cum Laude*
Alysia Killian, *Cum Laude*
Ahjanet McCoy
Tatanyi Morris, *Cum Laude*
Jovonte Temoney

Bachelor of Arts in Social Science

Zinnia Beard
Jerome Bowers
Jeremiah Bozeman
Carmen Caldwell
Zhane' Green
Marquavious Henderson
Jyheem Macklin.
Aleyah Maddox, *Magna Cum Laude*
Bredell Moore, *Cum Laude*
Keyashia Peoples, *Cum Laude*

Rashonda Sabb
Tatyana Simmons, *Cum Laude*
Dezare Smith, *Magna Cum Laude*
Jare Smith, *Cum Laude*
Martina Stokes, *Cum Laude*
Kenyatta Vaughn
D'Andre' Wilkerson, *Magna Cum Laude*
Marvin Williams, *Cum Laude*
Tre'Von Wilson

DIVISION OF MATHEMATICS AND NATURAL SCIENCES

Bachelor of Science in Biology

Michaela Barron, *Cum Laude*
Jasmine Blaxton, *Summa Cum Laude*
Corionah Calloway, *Cum Laude*
Talia Cyriaque, *Cum Laude*
Aneshia Holmes, *Cum Laude*
Jaden Larkin
Harry Locklear

Teleah Moorer, *Cum Laude*
Tya Morris, *Cum Laude*
Caleb Ross
Lauren Rowe, *Cum Laude*
Venus Rowe
Jasmine Wright, *Cum Laude*
De'Anna Young, *Cum Laude*

Bachelor of Science in Mathematics

Mohamed Alkadi, *Magna Cum Laude*
Delvin Peterson, Jr., *Cum Laude*

Reco Robinson, Jr., *Cum Laude*
Ma'lik Sherode

DICKERSON-GREEN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Associate of Arts in Religious Studies

Jimmie Bromell, *Summa Cum Laude*

Leroy Pearson, *Summa Cum Laude*

Bachelor of Arts in Religion

Michael Buckson, *Cum Laude*

Cantonia Prioleau, *Summa Cum Laude*

Master of Divinity

Angella Beckford-Days
Gary Dent, Jr.
Annette Edwards

Jones Gaye
Rose Marie Kitty
Ronald McFadden
Tradd Williams

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PLEDGE

We, the graduating seniors of 2024, do pledge our love and loyalty to Allen University; to give our lives to right civic wrongs and help raise the veil of darkness from all races; to be rich in virtue and through our homes be humble and still be great because of service to our Alma Mater and country.

To stand for justice and be an architectural base upon which a greater Allen will emerge; to light a torch with the name Allen upon the Nation's hill and give our undying support to the Allen University Alumni Association with a strength that neither tide nor time can alter.

This we pledge, as we become members of the General Alumni Association of Allen University.

T. B. Nelson

ALMA MATER

Allen to thee, we lift our hearts and voices,

Allen to thee, life's choicest gifts we pray,

And ever as we leave thy dear walls and halls so steeped in glory,

Guard well thy children; guard and guide us on our way.

Guard well thy children; guard and guide us on our way.

When other sons so true and daughter loyal,

Shall to their Alma Mater shout praises free,

We, too shall ever stand at thy side, and sing aloud forever,

Allen, fair Mother, we pledge our love to thee.

Allen, fair Mother, we pledge our love to thee.

F. McClain

(Audience please stand for the playing of the Alma Mater.)

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Mrs. Melita H. Riley
Chair, Business Department

Dr. Scott Dunn
Chair, Mathematics Department

Dr. Eboni Brown
Chair, Sports Management Department

ALLEN UNIVERSITY HISTORY

Allen University was founded by the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in South Carolina under the leadership of Bishop John M. Brown on July 29, 1870. In an effort led by Reverend Simon Miller, 150 acres of land were purchased for the institution in Cokesbury, SC. The newly founded school was named Payne Institute in honor of Bishop Daniel A. Payne, a South Carolinian, and noted advocate for Black education. During its first 10 years, the school prospered in



fulfilling its mission of developing an educated clergy in the face of repression and violent opposition during the Reconstruction Era. Delegates to the Annual Conference in Spartanburg, SC in 1880, with Bishop William F. Dickerson presiding, voted to move Payne Institute to Columbia, SC. Concurrently, Payne Institute was renamed Allen University in honor of Bishop Richard Allen, founder of the AME Church.

Into the 20th century, Allen met the needs of students at all educational levels. The curriculum not only included courses in law, theology, and the arts, but also, coursework at elementary and high school levels. It was possible to enter Allen as a child in first grade and leave prepared to teach, preach, or prosecute/defend in the courts as fully trained educators, ministers, and lawyers. The grammar school closed in the mid-1920s, and the high school in 1933.

An influx of veterans pursued studies at Allen following World War II. In the 1940's, Departments of Humanities, Philosophy, Psychology and Religion were added to existing academic programs. During the 1960's, the University fielded highly successful athletic teams that competed in the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (SIAC). In 1970, the University marked a century of service with a Centennial celebration, and rededicated itself to the principles upon which it was founded.

Responsive to changes in society, Allen revised its curricula in the 1980s and began to pursue regional accreditation. The 1990s was a period of growth and development, that resulted in the first accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges. During that period, the John Hurst Adams Gymnasium was constructed. In the early 2000s, Arnett Hall received a major restoration, the Williams Residence Halls were constructed, and Chappelle Auditorium and Gallery were restored/renovated.

In 2016, Bishop Samuel L. Green, Sr. brought an enlightened system of governance to the institution that fueled dramatic change and growth. Under the leadership of its 30th President Dr. Ernest McNealey, the campus received a dramatic aesthetic facelift, NCAA athletics were returned, Reid and Higgins Halls were renovated, noteworthy capacity in information technology was acquired, the historic Waverly Hospital building was renovated and expanded, and the Boeing Institute on Civility at Allen University was launched. In 2018, the University moved from Level II to Level III to offer its first graduate program, the Master of Divinity degree via the newly formed Dickerson-Green Theological Seminary. The Seminary attained associate membership in the Association of Theological Schools 3-years later. In 2023, the University moved from Level III to Level V to offer its first doctoral program, the Doctor of Ministry.

The University has a distinguished history, rich in the tradition of promoting personal and spiritual growth, and in educating men and women to become productive leaders and citizens in an ever-changing world.



“All That Can Be Imagined”

“We teach the mind to think, the hands to work, and the heart to love”

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www.allenuniversity.edu

Allen University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate, baccalaureate, masters, educational specialist, and doctorate degrees. Allen University also may offer credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels. Questions about the accreditation of Allen University may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website (www.sacscoc.org).