

# **Hooding Ceremony**

## **2026**



**Tuesday, May 12, 2026**  
**6:00 P.M.**  
**Dolan Performance Hall**  
**Annunciation Center**



## **The History of Academic Regalia**

The tradition of academic regalia in higher education developed in the 12th and 13th centuries in the early European universities. Medieval gowns and hoods served practical purposes, providing warmth in unheated stone buildings and distinguishing individual scholars and their academic specialties.

Over time, these practical garments evolved into symbolic representations of academic achievement and institutional affiliation. By the 14th century, specific styles and colors began to denote scholarly rank and field of study.

The American academic dress code largely follows the system established in the late 19th century by European universities, drawing heavily from Oxford and Cambridge traditions.

Academic regalia may include:

Gowns, which vary in style according to the degree earned (bachelor's, master's, doctorate), primarily reflected in the cut of the sleeves.

Hoods, which feature the official colors of the institution granting the degree and the traditional colors of a graduate's field of study. The length of the hood also varies by degree.

Caps, which may vary on shape and size according to the specific institution and the student's degree level. Doctoral graduates may sometimes wear a velvet tam and the tassel color can indicate the field of study for bachelor's and master's degrees.

Academic regalia connects contemporary graduates to a long and distinguished history of scholarship and learning, symbolizing their accomplishments and the traditions of higher education. For Saint Elizabeth University's 2026 Graduate Hooding Ceremony, these colorful garments represent your dedication, achievement, and entry into a community of scholars.

## Ceremony

*Processional* .....Dr. Ryan McLaughlin  
Faculty Assembly President

*Invocation* .....Dr. Elena Colicelli, S.C.  
Professor Emerita

*Welcome* .....Dr. Anthony B. Santamaria  
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

*Hooding Ceremony*.....Dr. Patricia Heindel  
Associate Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs

*Student Address*.....Jasmine Vala Jilus '26  
Candidate for Doctor of Education  
Educational Leadership

Bhoomika Ajay Vachhani '26  
Candidate for Master of Arts  
Counseling Psychology

*Induction in the SEU Alumnae/i Association*.....  
Ellieen Ancrum Ingbritsen, Ed.D. '80  
President of the Alumnae/i Association  
of the College of Saint Elizabeth and University

*Benediction*.....Fr. Joseph Farias  
University Chaplain and  
Advisor to the President for Mission Integration

*Closing Remarks*.....Dr. Anthony B. Santamaria

*Recessional* .....Dr. Ryan McLaughlin

Reception to follow in Lower Lobby

---

## President's Message

Dear Graduates,

It is my distinct honor to extend warmest congratulations to each of you on the occasion of the 2026 Hooding Ceremony. This meaningful milestone marks the culmination of your academic journey and stands as a proud testament to your perseverance, dedication, and unwavering commitment to excellence.

The Hooding Ceremony holds a special significance, symbolizing not only the completion of your graduate studies but also the transformation that has taken place within you. Along the way, you have deepened your knowledge, strengthened your skills, and grown both personally and professionally. Today, we celebrate all that you have accomplished and the promise you carry forward.

As you step into this next chapter, know that you do so prepared to lead, to serve, and to make a lasting impact in your communities and professions.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, staff, students, and alumni, I offer my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes for a future filled with purpose, success, and boundless opportunity.

Go forward with confidence and take God with you.

Sincerely,  
Gary B. Crosby, Ph.D.  
President

---

---

**Class of 2026**  
**Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership**

**Sarah Elbery**

Sarah Elbery earned her Bachelor's degree from Rutgers University-New Brunswick where she double majored in Public Policy and Middle Eastern Studies. She began her career in education in 2016, as a middle school science teacher at a charter school district in Newark, New Jersey. During her teaching career, she also served as the founding Science Department Chair and an Instructional Coach supporting new teachers. While teaching, Sarah earned her Master's Degree in Public Administration from Rutgers University-Newark. After six years of teaching, Sarah transitioned into educational talent acquisition and human resources. She currently serves as a Human Resources manager at a charter high school in Newark, New Jersey.

Her dissertation "*Challenges in Teacher Retention and High Turnover Rates in Urban Charter School Districts*," examined trends in teacher turnover, identified key factors contributing to high teacher turnover rates, and explored strategies to improve teacher retention in urban educational settings. This dissertation explored the lived experiences and perceptions of current and former teachers in urban charter schools in Newark, New Jersey. Findings indicated that teacher turnover in urban charter schools is increasingly driven less by retirement or personal circumstances and more by factors related to school and organizational structures.

**Doctoral Committee:**

Dr. Joseph Ciccone, Ed.D., Faculty Advisor

Dr. Keith Neigel, Ed.D., Second Reader

Dr. Felix Linfante Ph.D., Third Reader

---

---

### **Jasmine V. Jilus**

Jasmine V. Jilus has around 15 years of experience in Higher Education, starting at New Jersey City University, where she worked in Residence Life while earning her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. As she pursued her graduate studies at Montclair State University, earning a Master of Arts in Counseling with a focus on Higher Education/Student Affairs, she broadened her professional experience across areas including Assessment, Academic Advising, Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF), Transfer Services, and more. She has spent most of her career in different roles within student services and development. Currently, she is the Director of Career Services at Union College of Union County in New Jersey, where she continues to pursue her passion for helping students succeed academically and professionally.

Her dissertation, *"Access to On-Campus College Childcare Centers: Improving Faculty and Staff Well-Being and Productivity,"* focuses on work-life balance and institutional support systems in higher education. It examines how campus childcare services affect the experiences of parent employees across different institutional settings. Using an action research case study approach, she explores the perspectives of parent employees with and without access to on-campus childcare, as well as childcare center directors, to better understand the impact of these services on employee productivity, focus, and overall well-being. Based on qualitative inquiry, her work aims to connect theory and practice by providing evidence-based insights that inform institutional policies and support the development of more family-friendly campus environments that address the diverse needs of higher education employees.

#### **Doctoral Committee:**

Dr. Joseph Ciccone, Ed.D., Faculty Advisor

Dr. Keith Neigel Ed. D., Second Reader

Dr. Felix Linfante, Ph.D., Third Reader

---

---

## **Alisha Janelle Lee**

Alisha Lee-Ellis began her career as a pre-kindergarten teacher in 2002. Since then, she has served in various roles, including developmental interventionist, special education teacher, Instructional coach, vice principal, educational consultant, and professional development trainer for a global early childhood curriculum company. She currently serves as the vice principal at Grover Cleveland Elementary School in Rahway, New Jersey. Alisha holds standard certifications as a teacher of pre-K through grade 3, a teacher of students with disabilities, a supervisor, and a principal. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Public Administration from Kean University and a Master of Arts in Educational Leadership from Saint Elizabeth University.

Her dissertation, *“The Relationship between Language Development and Challenging Behaviors in Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Students,”* examines the extent to which young children demonstrate difficulties with language and positive communication behaviors. Additionally, it explores the strategies educators are implementing to support the development of these skills. The study also seeks to identify the additional supports and resources needed to ensure that both students and teachers are successful in meeting these developmental and instructional needs.

### **Doctoral Committee:**

Dr. Joseph Ciccone, Ed.D., Faculty Advisor

Dr. Keith Neigel, Ed.D., Second Reader

Dr. Dorothy Handfield, Ed.D., Third Reader

---

---

## **Christopher Rengel**

Christopher Rengel began his career with the Union City Police Department in 2005. He was promoted to Sergeant in 2011, where he oversaw the Internal Affairs Unit. In 2022 he was promoted to Lieutenant, where he has held the position of Chief of Staff, Professional Standards Commander, and Patrol Tour Commander. In 2022, he earned his Master of Arts in Human Resource Training and Development from Seton Hall University. Dr. Christopher Rengel is dedicated to higher education and research. His goal is to be a Professor and lead a Police Graduate Program when he retires from Law Enforcement.

His dissertation, *“Examining the Perceptions of Campus Law Enforcement Officers and Students, Faculty, and Administrators Regarding Using Body-Worn Cameras on the Quality of Engagement on a College Campus,”* explored the perceptions of body-worn cameras in a college environment. Understanding stakeholder perceptions in academia is crucial to implementing a robust body-worn camera program. The findings from this research can help guide Campus Police Leadership and College Administrators on developing a successful body-worn camera program.

### **Doctoral Committee:**

Dr. Joseph Ciccone, Ed.D., Faculty Advisor

Dr. Keith Neigel, Ed.D., Second Reader

Dr. Joel Bloom, Ed.D., Third Reader

---

---

## **Nicholas Steffner**

Dr. Nicholas Steffner serves as the Principal of Ridgedale Middle School in Florham Park, New Jersey, where he leads with a deep commitment to building a school community grounded in belonging, accountability, and shared responsibility. Under his leadership, Ridgedale has been recognized as both a National Forum School to Watch and a 2025 AMLE School of Distinction, reflecting its alignment to the highest standards of middle-level education.

His work is rooted in the belief that relationships are the foundation of learning, and that schools are most effective when they move beyond compliance toward commitment. Dr. Steffner has led the implementation of a comprehensive restorative practices model, resulting in significant reductions in disciplinary referrals and suspensions, while strengthening student voice, ownership, and connection to the school community.

In addition to his role as principal, Dr. Steffner is the Founder and Chief Training Officer of Restorative Leadership Consulting LLC, a facilitator for the New Jersey State Bar Foundation, and an adjunct professor at Montclair State University. Across all of his work, he remains focused on developing systems that ensure every student is known, valued, and supported—living out the Ridgedale motto: *A Community of One*.

His dissertation “*Building Restorative School Communities: A Study on the Impact of Restorative Practices*,” examines how the intentional implementation of restorative practices can transform school culture, strengthen relationships, and improve student outcomes. Through a multi-year study at Ridgedale Middle School, the research highlights a shift from compliance-based discipline to a model grounded in fair process, student voice, and relational accountability. Findings include significant reductions in disciplinary referrals, increased student sense of belonging, and greater staff confidence in addressing conflict. The study underscores that restorative practices are most effective when embedded proactively—particularly through structures like advisory—ensuring relationships are built before conflict arises. This work offers a practical model for schools seeking to foster environments where students move beyond compliance and toward commitment to their community.

### **Doctoral Committee:**

Dr. Joseph Ciccone, Ed.D., Faculty Advisor

Dr. Keith Neigel, Ed.D., Second Reader

Dr. Brian Zychowski, Ed.D., Third Reader

---

---

## **Alexandra (Allie) Tegethoff**

Allie Tegethoff began her career as a registered nurse in 2013, after graduating from Ramapo College of New Jersey's Bachelors of Nursing program. While working as a nurse in the medical field, she completed her Masters of Nursing in Nursing Education from Ramapo College of NJ in January of 2016. Upon graduation, she started working as an Adjunct Instructor of Nursing at Brookdale Community College before accepting a full time

faculty position there in January of 2018. She remained there until the spring of 2021, before accepting an adjunct position at Georgian Court University in the summer of the same year. As of August 2024, she accepted a full time faculty position at the rank of Assistant Professor of Nursing at Georgian Court University.

Her dissertation, "*Faculty Knowledge and Perceptions of UDL Implementation in Nursing Education*," examined the current state of the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework in the field of nursing education. This study centered on the awareness and prior experiences of nursing program faculty with UDL. The findings indicated that faculty perceptions of UDL were positive, agreeing that it enhanced student learning, technology familiarity was the most cited individual barrier to UDL implementation, and lack of awareness of the UDL framework is an ongoing challenge to widespread use. It emphasizes the need for professional development activities catered to a higher education audience to increase awareness.

### **Doctoral Committee:**

Dr. Joseph Ciccone, Ed.D., Faculty Advisor

Dr. Keith Neigel, Ed.D., Second Reader

Dr. Felix Linfante, Ph.D., Third Reader

---

---

**Class of 2026**  
**Doctor of Psychology in Counseling Psychology**

**Anais Abeigon**

Anais Abeigon began her career in 2018 as a Program Counselor at a Department of Corrections residential reentry and assessment center, providing individual and group therapy to incarcerated men transitioning back into the community. She has since gained experience in community mental health and medical settings, working with children, adolescents, and adults, with a focus on trauma-informed care and psychological assessment.

Anais is currently a Psychology Intern at Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care where she provides psychotherapy, crisis intervention, and forensic risk assessment in correctional settings, along with consultation-liaison services at University Hospital in Newark.

Anais earned her Bachelor's degree in Forensic Psychology from John Jay College of Criminal Justice and her Master's degree in Counseling Psychology from Saint Elizabeth University. Now having earned her Doctorate in Counseling Psychology, Dr. Abeigon remains committed to providing compassionate, evidence-based care to underserved and justice-involved populations.

Her dissertation, *"Parental Self-Efficacy and Parental Perceptions of School Climate to Parental Involvement in an Urban District,"* explored how parental self-efficacy and perceptions of school climate influence parental involvement in their children's education. This study sought to explore if results differed for parents who participated in district-offered adult education programs. Quantitative findings indicated that Parental Self-Efficacy, Perceptions of School Climate, and Parental Involvement were positively associated, with Self-Efficacy emerging as a significant predictor of Parental Involvement. Qualitative results captured parents' perspectives, shedding light on the barriers they face when trying to engage in their children's education. This study emphasized that both psychological and environmental factors influence parental involvement and highlights the importance of district-level programming designed to enhance parental self-efficacy and mitigate barriers to participation.

**Doctoral Committee:**

Dr. Patricia Heindel, Ph.D., Faculty Advisor  
Dr. Randolph Shipon, Ph.D., Second Reader  
Dr. Daniel Balboni, Psy.D., Third Reader

---

---

### **Theresa Marie Lewis**

Theresa began her career in human services in 2011, working with individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities. She earned her BA in Psychology from the City College of New York in 2011 and later received her MA in Counseling Psychology from SEU in 2018, beginning her clinical work in 2019 providing therapy and behavioral health services across diverse settings. Theresa is a Licensed Professional Counselor in New Jersey whose work centers on trauma, spirituality, and culturally responsive care. She has provided psychotherapy and group interventions, including work with first responders, and has also served as an adjunct faculty member. In addition to these roles, she founded a culturally responsive mentorship program to support students and early-career therapists of color. Through her work, Theresa remains deeply committed to advancing culturally grounded approaches to healing and promoting resilience within the communities she serves.

Her dissertation "*From Pain to Peace: The Impact of Spirituality and Narrative Practice on Psychological Healing in the Black Community*," explored how spirituality functioned as a transformative force for Black adults navigating trauma and adversity. Using a qualitative narrative approach, Theresa examined participants' lived experiences of trauma, spirituality, and healing. Through narrative analysis, she analyzed how individuals constructed meaning, identity, and connection to God within their personal stories. Her findings highlight spirituality as both a culturally rooted and psychologically significant resource that supported emotional healing and identity reconstruction. Her work contributes to the field of psychology by bridging culturally specific experiences with broader processes of resilience and meaning making, emphasizing the importance of integrating spiritual and culturally responsive approaches in clinical practice.

#### **Doctoral Committee:**

Dr. Glen Sherman, Ph.D., Faculty Advisor  
Dr. Randolph Shipon, Ph.D., Second Reader  
Dr. Erika January, Ph.D., Third Reader

---

---

## **Alicia Maldonado**

Alicia began her career in psychology after unexpectedly accepting a position at a school for children with developmental and intellectual disabilities. Through this work, she supported individuals across a range of abilities, including children involved in child protective services and people with traumatic brain injuries.

Alicia earned her bachelor's degree in psychology from New Jersey City University and her master's degree in clinical psychology from Montclair State University. Alicia is currently completing her postdoctoral training as a Psychological Counselor at Ramapo College of New Jersey in the ENHANCE program, where she works with college-aged students on the autism spectrum. She also provides therapy at the Center for Specialized Psychology, a private practice focused on women and children in areas including trauma, anxiety, and depression. Her clinical work is grounded in a trauma-informed and neurodiversity-affirming approach, emphasizing individual strengths and agency.

Her dissertation, "*A Psychological Study of Latine Families of Children with Autism*," explored the experiences of Latine parents raising children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), with a focus on how cultural values shape their navigation of healthcare systems. Utilizing a case study methodology, she conducted semi-structured interviews with parents of adult children on the autism spectrum to better understand their lived experiences.

This approach allowed her to examine both shared and individual perspectives across participants. Findings revealed six overarching themes, including emotional adaptation; perceptions of their child, family culture, and community; navigating healthcare; and advice and reflections for other parents and providers. Culturally specific nuances emerged, particularly in relation to extended family dynamics, experiences of denial, and the role of informal peer support.

### **Doctoral Committee:**

Dr. Glen Sherman, Ph.D., Faculty Advisor

Dr. Jill Caruso, Psy.D., Second Reader

Dr. Yesenia Flores, Psy.D., Third Reader

---

---

## **Margaret Anne Medina**

Margaret began her career in 2023 as an extern at the Quad Preparatory School in Manhattan, where she provided psychotherapy as well as academic and social-emotional support to twice-exceptional students. She then completed an externship at the Veterans Administration Hospital in East Orange, NJ, where she provided psychotherapy to Gulf War veterans. In 2023, she joined the Rutgers World Trade Center Health Program as a Psychology Intern and also completed her post-doctoral training with the program. Margaret has remained with the World Trade Center Health Program and currently serves as a Staff Clinician. Her clinical and research interests are centered on posttraumatic stress disorder, with a special focus on understanding the unique mental health challenges faced by veterans and first responders. She is committed to supporting individuals who have dedicated their lives to service, helping to navigate the complexities of trauma, build resilience, and move forward on their path toward healing and well-being.

Her dissertation *“Twenty-Four Years Later: Long-Term Trajectories of PTSD Symptom Clusters in a Cohort of Responders to the 9/11 World Trade Center Attack,”* explored posttraumatic stress disorder symptom trajectories over a twenty-four year period among a cohort of responders to the September 11<sup>th</sup> World Trade Center attack. Margaret utilized linear mixed effects modeling to examine patterns of re-experiencing, avoidance, and hyperarousal symptom cluster trajectories across time and across responder type, race, and gender. The findings indicated that across the twenty-four-year observation period, all three symptom clusters exhibited gradual decreases over time. Traditional responders endorsed lower levels of PTSD symptoms across clusters compared to non-traditional responders, while Race was found to be significantly associated with overall symptom severity across symptom clusters, and Gender was not found to predict or moderate symptom cluster trajectories. The study’s findings suggest long-term persistence of 9/11-related PTSD symptoms among responders and have implications for the development of targeted and culturally informed therapeutic interventions for the treatment of PTSD in disaster responders.

### **Doctoral Committee:**

Dr. Christina Liparini, Ph.D., Faculty Advisor

Dr. Steven Hertler, Psy.D., Second Reader

Dr. Erika January, Ph.D., Third Reader

---

---

## **Debra Pacheco Rodriguez**

Debra began her career in 2019 in the Paterson Public School system, where she worked as a mentor for children in grades K-3, providing social-emotional learning and academic support to students with learning difficulties. During that same year, she also worked as a Registered Behavior Technician, supporting children and adolescents ages 3-18 diagnosed with Autism, while finishing her Master's degree at Saint Elizabeth University. Debra is currently a clinical intern at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, where she works with college students navigating life transitions and complex clinical concerns. She also provides therapy in Spanish and approaches her work through a culturally inclusive lens. Beyond academics, Debra is deeply committed to advocacy and outreach within marginalized communities.

Her dissertation, *“Exploring the Experiences of Siblings of Individuals Diagnosed with ADHD in the Latino Community,”* explored the lived experiences of individuals who grew up with a sibling diagnosed with ADHD within the Latino community, with a particular focus on how cultural values and family dynamics shape those experiences. The study found that siblings of individuals with ADHD in Latino families often took on significant caregiving and advocacy roles, reflecting experiences of parentification. Cultural values like familismo contributed to a strong sense of responsibility, close sibling bonds, and emotional suppression, along with challenges related to stigma around mental health and confusion about the ADHD diagnosis.

### **Doctoral Committee:**

Dr. Christina Liparini, Ph.D., Faculty Advisor

Dr. Glen Sherman, Ph.D., Second Reader

Dr. Jill Caruso, Psy.D., Third Reader

---

---

## **Emily J. Parodi**

For nearly three decades, Emily J. Parodi's career has focused on serving those who are marginalized, disenfranchised, and underserved. Rooted in the principles of feminist counseling, her understanding of clients is informed by the social, political, and economic inequities that women and many men navigate in contemporary society. Healing, in her view, requires not only therapeutic intervention but advocacy and the dismantling of the conditions that produce suffering in the first place.

She has brought these values to her work in domestic violence shelters, homeless shelters, women's health clinics, treatment programs, and educational institutions. Her clients have ranged the lifespan and included areas of focus such as trauma, addiction, eating disorders, gender identity, domestic violence, and family planning.

Emily came to SEU with a Master's degree in Counseling and Guidance from New York University, with a concentration in the Psychology of Women, and a Bachelor's degree in Sociology from Linfield College. She is a member of Psi Chi International Psychology Honor Society. Since 2007 she has owned and operated her own mental health counseling practice, holding masters-level licensure in both New Jersey and New York.

During her time at Saint Elizabeth University, Emily completed clinical training at Resolve Community Counseling Center, Park Avenue Psychotherapy, and the Highland Park Teen Center, deepening her expertise across assessment, individual and group therapy, supervision, and evidence-based treatment modalities.

Emily's dissertation, *"Motherhood is Gnarly, With Moments of Cupcake and Rainbows: The Role of Societal Expectations on Maternal Mental Health,"* used the Listening Guide methodology to explore the gap between new mothers' expectations of motherhood and their lived experience, including how that misalignment affects their mental well-being. Her findings challenge essentialist narratives of motherhood and call for the structural changes needed to adequately support mothers.

### **Doctoral Committee:**

Dr. Christina Liparini, Ph.D., Faculty Advisor

Dr. Glen Sherman, Ph.D., Second Reader

Dr. Amanda Bordfeld Ferguson, Ph.D., Third Reader

---

---

## **Katherine Posada**

Katherine began her clinical career in 2019 as a Behavior Support Specialist for Anchor Behavioral Services where she worked with adults with special needs to promote independence within their communities. She later expanded her clinical training through doctoral externships in school-based and child protection settings, where she developed strong skills in assessment, trauma-informed care, and family psychoeducation. Katherine is currently a Doctoral Psychology Intern at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington Counseling Center where she works with college students navigating identity development, life transitions, and complex clinical concerns. She also co-facilitates process groups for students of color and Latinx students. Katherine earned her Bachelor's degree in Psychology with a concentration in Behavioral Neuroscience from Fairleigh Dickinson University and her Master's degree in Counseling Psychology from Saint Elizabeth University. Upon completion of her internship, Katherine will work at the West Essex Psychology Center in Livingston as a Post-Doctoral Fellow.

Her dissertation, *"Somos Distintos: Exploring the Effects of Cultural Capital, Self-Efficacy, and Achievement Guilt on Academic Retention Among Latinx Males,"* examines the psychological and cultural factors that influence academic persistence in this population. Katherine investigates how internal beliefs about competence, access to cultural and institutional resources, and feelings of guilt related to success shape students' ability to remain in higher education. Her mixed-methods approach to the study analyzes the relationship between self-efficacy, cultural capital, and achievement guilt to better understand their impact on retention outcomes. The findings highlight how both individual and systemic factors contribute to academic persistence, underscoring the complexity of navigating higher education as a Latino male.

### **Doctoral Committee:**

Dr. Christina Liparini, Ph.D., Faculty Advisor

Dr. Randolph Shipon, Ph.D., Second Reader

Dr. Leslie Perez, Psy.D., Third Reader

---

---

## **Fawn Stefanie Zwickel**

Fawn's career began with a deep devotion to family, where her passion for veteran advocacy was ignited. She co-authored *From Omaha Beach to Nuremberg: A Memoir of WWII Combat and the International Military Tribunal*, documenting the historical experiences of World War II veterans. Through this work and volunteering for No Veteran Dies Alone, she witnessed firsthand the long-term effects of combat trauma on veterans' chronic health. Determined to deepen her knowledge, Fawn earned her Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology from the College of Saint Elizabeth in 2021.

Fawn's academic path took her through veteran-driven programs including the Transitioning Servicemember and Veteran Suicide Prevention Center at the James J. Peters VA Medical Center in the Bronx, NY, where she conducted suicide risk assessments, safety planning, and individual psychotherapy. She also worked with Community Hope, offering transitional housing for veterans, while volunteering with the Board of County Commissioners to continue legislative advocacy. She accepted an internship at Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, broadening her clinical experience with rural and underserved populations.

Her dissertation, *"The Human Response: A Phenomenological Understanding of Moral Injury in Veteran Suicide,"* explores moral injury experienced by U.S. Army and Marine combat veterans who faced suicidal ideation or attempts during civilian reintegration. Using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, Fawn captured participants' lived experiences of moral conflict arising from actions that clash with their core beliefs, an injury often more impactful than PTSD. The study highlights the need for clinicians to identify at-risk individuals and intervene effectively, and underscores the importance of research into interventions that foster narrative reconstruction, and emotional resilience among returning service members.

### **Doctoral Committee:**

Dr. Glen Sherman, Ph.D., Faculty Advisor

Dr. Steven Hertler, Psy.D., Second Reader

Dr. Patricia Heindel, Ph.D., Third Reader

---

---

**Class of 2026  
Master of Arts**

**Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology  
Faculty Presenter, Dr. Jill Caruso**

Ayesha Akram  
Safia Bokhari  
Hannah Caposela  
Gabriela A. Carrillo  
Danielle Nicole Crosson  
Briana Ivette Gomez  
Castano Gomez  
Keisha Harris  
Priya Mathew  
Steven Daniel Medina  
Hannah Rose Perry  
Mariely Quispe Mejia  
Bhoomika Ajay Vachhani

**Master of Arts in Educational Leadership  
Faculty Presenter, Dr. Joseph Ciccone**

Nermeen Eldeeb  
Caroline Murphy

**Master of Arts in Justice Administration  
and Public Service  
Faculty Presenter, Dr. Kathy Marino**

Sumika Arakawa  
Timothy John Griffin  
Ashlyn Nicole Hallums  
Marc Anthony Iandiorio  
Jaden Jackson  
Richard McDonald  
Daniel Ernesto Novoa  
Shanell Pommells  
Kierren Robinson  
Briants Rodriguez  
Ishaya Kaniyah Williams-Hairston

---

---

**Class of 2026  
Master of Science**

**Master of Science in Data Analytics  
Faculty Presenter, Dr. Jesse Yu**

Joshua Anthony Gonzalez

**Master of Science in Management  
Faculty Presenter, Professor Wendy Hahn**

Diana May Achieng  
Karina Bellido  
Isabell Irene Edwards  
Herbina Exume  
Kennedy L. Ferguson  
Malamin Kaba  
Kyra Rowe  
Bryan Marquise Williams

**Master of Science in Nutrition  
Faculty Presenter, Dr. Anne Buison Pellizzon**

Elizabeth Killeen  
Maeve Katelin Maguire

**Master of Science in Nursing  
Faculty Presenter, Dr. Patricia McQuade**

Alana Helen Hooghuis  
Marcella Ann Klepacki

**Master of Science in Nursing  
Faculty Presenter, Dr. Mary Ann Anderson**

Carly Jude Lozosky  
Valerie Marcus  
Joan Meechee  
Anna Wida

---

---

**Master of Science in Physician Assistant  
Faculty Presenter, Dr. Linda Liotti**

Rebecca Appelbaum  
Miriam Bayaz  
Angela Mae Brooks  
Caitlin Marie Creegan  
Megan Ashley Daoud  
Megan Finck  
John Flanagan  
Angela German  
Julia Catherine Hadley  
Shaina Michelle Hoff  
Eugene Kim  
Brianna Nichole Lennenhan  
Jessica Anna Lidwin  
Bryan Linares  
Ryan Nicholas LoPiccolo  
Tara Ann Musialowicz  
Sara Ocampo  
Olga Prifti  
Kayla Purcell  
Patricia Marie Ramirez  
Emily Rufolo  
Brian Scheno  
Adina Schick  
Christine Tawfik  
Madelyn Rose Uetz  
Jessica Lizzet Velasquez-Julca  
Rachel Marie Wagner  
Keelyn Bailey Weber  
Danielle Yaghi  
Sarah Yankson  
Malya Zelinger

---

---

*Thank you to all who helped make this event a success:*

*Academic Affairs*

*Aramark*

*Facilities*

*Faculty*

*IT*

*Registrar*

*Student Affairs*

\*The inclusion or exclusion of names in this program does not have any official bearing on a student's standing with Saint Elizabeth University. Official records regarding degree completion are maintained by the Office of the Registrar.

---

Scan to access digital program



2 Convent Road  
Morristown, NJ 07960  
[www.steu.edu](http://www.steu.edu)