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# Doctoral Hooding 2022: achieving the highest levels of academic achievement



In a moving ceremony marked by symbolism and tradition, 60 [Governors State University](#) (GSU) doctoral candidates were recently draped with velvet hoods on the stage of the [Center for Performing Arts](#), welcoming them into the exclusive community of academia.

“Tonight, you have reached the highest level of education in your professions,” Provost Beverly Schneller said to the graduates, adorned in elegant academic robes and doctoral tams.

Seated in perfectly symmetrical rows alongside the candidates, Schneller was joined by members of GSU's Cabinet as well as leadership, including Trustees Jim Kvedaras, Angela Sebastian, and Chair Lisa Harrell.

President Cheryl Green, savoring her first in-person hooding since joining the university



early into the pandemic, she said that she was both proud and humbled by the graduates' accomplishments.

Dr. Green, beaming with pride, told the candidates the hooding ritual was a formality dating back centuries.

“Tonight’s ceremony is not a graduation; that comes next. Tonight’s ceremony is an investiture - a formal ceremony at which someone is given an official rank. This ceremony is part of an academic tradition that goes back centuries. .... Wear your regalia with pride – it helps to tell your story.”

Dating back to medieval times, the hooding tradition celebrates academic achievement. Today, each degree is signified by a special color lining an elegant velvet scarf, which once held a functional role - to keep warm the shaven heads of monks.



Also new to the in person-ceremony, Chair Harrell said it was difficult to find words for the occasion. After considering her experiences and interactions with the doctoral candidates she realized something.

“I started thinking about my individual experiences and interactions with you and realized there was no single quote that actually captured this moment because you didn’t need inspiration. . . You ARE the inspiration. It was not words that were inspiring but you that inspired the words. ... Because of whom you are, when others are still talking about what can’t be done, you are too busy doing it to notice the barriers. You see not the problems but the possibilities.”

One candidate who embodies this sentiment is Sharva Hampton-Campbell, who earned an Ed.D. in the [Interdisciplinary Leadership \(INLD\) program](#) with the dream of continuing her work supporting and elevating former foster youth who are attending

four-year universities.



At the heart of her passion to serve this community lies more than 20 years of fostering youth in her home, Hampton-Campbell said. A student affairs coordinator for the School of Social Work at the University of Illinois, Hampton-Campbell completed her program almost entirely online and now looks forward to expanding her work to promote retention rates for foster and former foster youth attending colleges and university.

“My dream is to create a consulting business that partners the university with social service agencies to better support our kids.”

Though the university has offered an Ed.D. degree for years, this is the first year candidates could earn a doctorate of philosophy. Yenitza Guzman is among the first to earn a Ph.D. in Counseling Education and Supervision.





A member of the self-named “Noble Nine” cohort, Guzman said it feels good to be part of a historical class at Governors State where she earned her master’s in 2015.

“Obviously, I love Governors State. The faculty and staff are so supportive. I had two children while I was in the program, and they just worked with me. I feel like the program caters to working professionals,” said Guzman, who works as a high school counselor in Chicago.

With her doctorate, she hopes to teach at the college level and, one day mentor future counselors who are at risk for high turnover.

“I’d love the opportunity to work with students who want to be counselors and help them understand the roles and responsibilities and avoid the traps of burnout,” she said.

Provost Schneller who joined GSU in March 2022, served as emcee and was excited to celebrate the candidates from the [College of Health and Human Services](#) and [College of Education](#). She applauded them for choosing to help others.

“Our candidates have chosen professions that make a difference in the lives of others through the use of



effective evidence-based practices... doctors of physical therapy and occupational therapy will help people heal, cope and adapt. Doctors of nursing practice will provide treatments that improve healthcare outcomes and best practices in nursing education. Doctors of counselor education and supervision will utilize research-based interventions to improve mental health management and treatment of those they serve. And graduates of the Interdisciplinary Leadership Doctoral program are prepared to provide leadership to public and non-profit entities.”

Before closing the ceremony, Dr. Schneller shared the words of physicist Marie Curie who said, “Life is not easy for any of us. But what of that? We must have perseverance and, above all, confidence in ourselves. We must believe we are gifted for something, and that this something, at whatever cost, must be attained.”