



# **WESTERN GOVERNORS UNIVERSITY COMMENCEMENT**

**CHICAGO**

**SEPTEMBER 27, 2025**

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# CONGRATULATIONS, NIGHT OWL—TODAY YOU BECOME AN ALUMNI!

All of your hard work and sacrifices have paid off, graduate! You're joining more than **400,000** Night Owls who make up our alumni family. It's time to enjoy more benefits that come with your achievement.

## COMMIT TO LIFELONG LEARNING

Professional and continuing education extend beyond your time at WGU as a graduate. We are here to support your ongoing professional development by offering access to premium services such as LinkedIn Learning, Pluralsight®, the Teaching Channel®, Nurses on Boards Coalition®, and more!

Keep learning at the forefront of your mind at [wgu.edu/alumnilearn](https://wgu.edu/alumnilearn).

## PROGRESS TO THE NEXT LEVEL

Taking time to engage in professional development opportunities not only keeps you cutting edge in your field, it also allows you to network with other professionals and develop your professional brand—all of which can advance your career. WGU's Career and Professional Development team is here to help you thrive.

Get started at [wgu.edu/career-services](https://wgu.edu/career-services).

## JOIN THE NIGHT OWL NETWORK

This exclusive network is a great way to connect with other alumni, find or become an industry mentor, join professional interest groups, discover innovative ideas from other experts in your field, or even find new jobs!

Join today at [wgu.edu/nightownetwork](https://wgu.edu/nightownetwork).

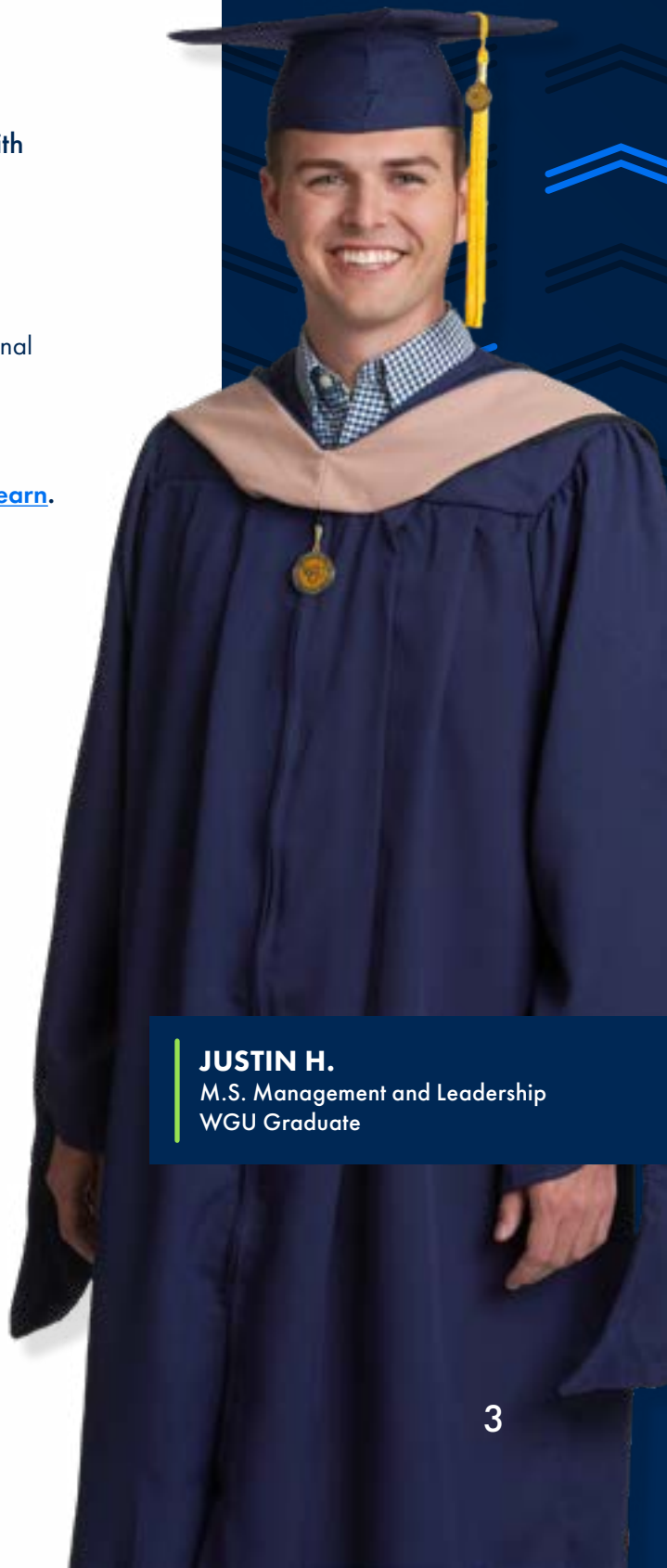
## STAY CONNECTED

Visit our website to find other resources and ways to stay involved. Look for military alumni resources, explore discounts, shop WGU merchandise, and keep an eye on other alumni events!

Join the community at [wgu.edu/alumni](https://wgu.edu/alumni).

## Learn more.

[wgu.edu/alumni](https://wgu.edu/alumni) 866.225.5948



**JUSTIN H.**  
M.S. Management and Leadership  
WGU Graduate

# YOU'RE INVITED!

## Alumni Celebration

**Friday, September 26**  
**6:00–9:00 p.m.**

Renaissance Schaumber Convention Center  
1551 Thoreau Dr N  
Schaumburg, IL 60173

**Kick off your commencement weekend with this exclusive alumni celebration in honor of our graduates!**

**All graduates attending the 2025 WGU Commencement in Chicago are invited to join us for the Alumni Celebration at the Renaissance Schaumburg Convention Center.**

**This family-friendly, come-and-go event is free to attend, and we encourage graduates and guests to dress in business attire.**

### At the celebration, you can:

- Free professional portraits (graduates only): Elevate your LinkedIn profile with free professional portraits- courtesy of WGU!
- Meet with local employers for career opportunities
- Reconnect with Alumni in your area
- Visit our affiliated partnership booths to receive career advice, purchase WGU swag, pick up your WGU Philanthropy Cord, and more.
- Take photos in our social photo booth and share using #WGUgrad
- Meet Sage the Night Owl
- Enjoy light appetizers, refreshments, and self-pay bars
- Hit the dance floor or play family-friendly games with a fun WGU twist
- Come for the networking, stay for the fun.
- Photo op lines close 15 minutes before the event ends (subject to change); arrive early to make the most of your evening

### Parking

Free limited parking on-site.

### Contact Information

Alumni Celebration: [alumnievents@wgu.edu](mailto:alumnievents@wgu.edu)

Alumni Celebration ADA and accessibility: [alumnievents@wgu.edu](mailto:alumnievents@wgu.edu)

Commencement questions: [commencement@wgu.edu](mailto:commencement@wgu.edu)

**Please note: 2025 Chicago graduates are allowed to bring up to six (6) total guests.**



# COMMENCEMENT IN CHICAGO

**Saturday, September 27, 2025**

**NOW Arena**

5333 Prairie Stone Prkwy,  
Hoffman Estates, IL 60192

**Leavitt School of Health and  
School of Education**

Graduate Check-In and Pre-seating: 8:30 a.m.

Commencement Ceremony: 9:30 a.m.

**School of Technology and  
School of Business**

Graduate Check-In and Pre-seating: 12:30 p.m.

Commencement Ceremony: 1:30 p.m.



**All graduates must check in  
before the ceremony!**

**Graduates must check in before the ceremony.**

Please have your Stage Pass pulled up on your phone screen to be scanned. Graduates are encouraged to wear comfortable shoes.

NOW Arena has implemented a Clear Bag Policy. A maximum size clear bag of 12"x6"x12" is permitted. Exceptions will be made for medical, family, or childcare bags or small clutches no larger than 4.5"x6.5.

All Guests and Graduates must pass through metal detectors to enter the venue. Please inform Security or Guest Services if you have any medical conditions that may be affected.

Please bring your cell phone with you to access your Stage Pass, and minimal personal belongings.



# LEAVITT SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND SCHOOL OF EDUCATION CEREMONY SCHEDULE

**DATE: SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2025**

**LOCATION:** NOW Arena, 5333 Prairie Stone Prkwy,  
Hoffman Estates, IL 60192

**Leavitt School of Health and School of Education**

Graduate Check-In: 8:30 a.m.

Ceremony Start Time: 9:30 a.m.

## **GRADUATE CHECK-IN: 8:30 A.M.**

At graduate check-in, you will have the opportunity to pick up your philanthropy, military, and/or scholarship cord. We will also have limited regalia available for purchase, and you can visit with our name readers to clarify pronunciation. If you notice that there are errors on your Stage Pass, please visit the Help Desk.

*Note: Only graduates are permitted in the Graduate Check-in Area*

## **GRADUATE PRE-SEATING: 8:30 A.M.**

After checking in, graduates will be guided directly to the arena floor where they will be seated with their schools. Please follow the direction of the college marshals.

## **COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY: 9:30 A.M.**

The ceremony will begin promptly. Please be in your seat and ready at this time. We look forward to celebrating you!

### **Conferral of Degree Order**

- Leavitt School of Health
- School of Education

**Note:**

*Graduates are called to the stage by schools and not in alphabetical order.*

*Graduates will receive their complimentary diploma cover after the conclusion of the ceremony.*

## **BEFORE ARRIVING FOR COMMENCEMENT**

All graduates participating in the Commencement ceremony must arrive wearing full academic attire: cap with tassel, hood, and gown. No changing rooms are available. Graduates are encouraged to wear comfortable shoes

## **AFTER THE CEREMONY**

Following the ceremony, graduates will exit through Door 4 on the Northwest corner of the Arena and proceed to Hoffman Blvd where they will meet their friends and family. Families and guests: Please meet your graduate at Hoffman Blvd outside the NOW Arena.

[Video: How to Wear Regalia](#)



**Remember to follow  
signs at check-in!**

# SCHOOL OF TECHNOLOGY AND SCHOOL OF BUSINESS CEREMONY SCHEDULE

**DATE: SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2025**

**LOCATION:** NOW Arena, 5333 Prairie Stone Prkwy,  
Hoffman Estates, IL 60192

## **School of Business and School of Technology**

Graduate Check-In: 12:30 p.m.

Ceremony Start Time: 1:30 p.m.

## **BEFORE ARRIVING FOR COMMENCEMENT**

All graduates participating in the Commencement ceremony must arrive wearing full academic attire: cap with tassel, hood, and gown. No changing rooms are available. Graduates are encouraged to wear comfortable shoes

## **AFTER THE CEREMONY**

Following the ceremony, graduates will exit through Door 4 on the Northwest corner of the Arena and proceed to Hoffman Blvd where they will meet their friends and family. Families and guests: Please meet your graduate at Hoffman Blvd outside the NOW Arena.



**Remember to follow  
signs at check-in!**

## **GRADUATE CHECK-IN: 12:30 P.M.**

At graduate check-in, you will have the opportunity to pick up your philanthropy, military, and/or scholarship cord. We will also have limited regalia available for purchase, and you can visit with our name readers to clarify pronunciation. If you notice that there are errors on your Stage Pass, please visit the Help Desk.

***Note: Only graduates are permitted in the Graduate Check-in Area.***

## **GRADUATE PRE-SEATING: 12:30 P.M.**

After checking in, graduates will be guided directly to the arena floor where they will be seated with their schools. Please follow the direction of the college marshals.

## **COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY: 1:30 P.M.**

The ceremony will begin promptly. Please be in your seat and ready at this time. We look forward to celebrating you!

## **Conferral of Degree Order**

- School of Technology
- School of Business

### **Note:**

***Graduates are called to the stage by schools and not in alphabetical order.***

***Graduates will receive their complimentary diploma cover after the conclusion of the ceremony.***

[\*\*Video: How to Wear Regalia\*\*](#)

# NOW ARENA POLICIES

## GUEST SERVICES

Guest Services are located outside section 111 on the concourse.

## EMT/FIRST AID

There is one First-Aid station at NOW Arena staffed with Village of Hoffman Estates EMS for select events. The First-Aid station is located on the Main Concourse near Section 112. If you are in need of medical attention, please notify a NOW Arena Guest Services Representative. The NOW Arena staff is trained to call for immediate response and assistance in emergency situations.

## GUEST SEATING

Seating is first-come, first-served. Guests should be seated with their cell phones on silent before the ceremony begins. Guests should remain in their seats during the entire ceremony as a courtesy to graduates and other guests.

The commencement venue allows photos and videos at the ceremony; however, we ask you to take photos from your seat rather than from the aisles due to fire and safety regulations and as a courtesy to other guests. WGU has hired a professional photographer for this event. Images of each graduate and the ceremony will be available online for purchase.

## PARKING

There are 3,200 on-site parking spaces at NOW Arena. There are plenty of handicapped accessible spaces off of Hoffman Blvd, and Pratum Ave. Once on property, parking attendants will direct you to the closest lot. Parking for all Graduation ceremonies is FREE and is available on a first come first serve basis.

## CONCESSIONS

Select concession stands around the NOW Arena concourse will be open for each ceremony. NOW Arena is a cashless Arena. We do accept Visa, MasterCard, Discover, American Express, Google Pay, Apple Pay, & Samsung Pay. Outside food and beverage (including alcoholic beverages) are strictly prohibited.

## LOST CHILDREN

Lost children/individuals should be taken to the nearest usher or security guard. If you become separated from your child or guests, please proceed to Guest Services for further assistance.

## BAG POLICY

NOW Arena has implemented a Clear Bag Policy that can be found [HERE](#). A maximum size clear bag of 12"x12"x6" is permitted. Exceptions will be made for medical, family, or childcare bags or small clutches no larger than 4.5"x 6.5".

Graduates and guests are encouraged not to bring bags with them to the events.

## NO SMOKING

Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the arena, including vapor electronic cigarettes.

## LOST AND FOUND ITEMS

If you have lost an item during an event, please visit Guest Services outside section 111. After an event you may call (847) 649-2270 Monday through Friday 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM. Please leave a voicemail with the item description, date it was lost, and your contact information.



# NOW ARENA POLICIES

## ACCESSIBILITY

Guests should use the ADA ramp located west of the main entrance of NOW Arena. Once a guest is inside the arena there will be signage for seating locations and staff will help direct the guest and one companion to an accessible seating section. Accessible seating is located on the concourse level inside the main arena. First-come first-serve accessible seating is available for only the guest with a mobility impairment and one companion. The rest of the party will need to sit in GA seating inside the arena bowl. Medical and Event staff cannot escort patrons to and from their vehicles via wheelchair.

## ACCESSIBLE PARKING & ACCESS MAP

For patrons with mobility needs, ADA parking is available in the East Lot Only. ADA parking is limited, so the Arena will reserve additional spaces adjacent to the ADA parking during graduations; however, space is still limited and provided on a first-come first-served basis.

## SENSORY INCLUSION

Guests who feel overstimulated or overwhelmed may visit the Sensory Room located at Guest Services, on the main concourse.

## RESTROOMS

Restrooms are located on all levels.

## SERVICE ANIMALS

Only certified service animals or service animals in-training for guests with disabilities are allowed in the arena. All service animals must remain on a leash or in a harness at all times.

## GRADUATES



There will be a metal detector—bring only your phone with you!



Please have your Stage Pass up on your phone screen.



Please do not bring any bags or purses with you to the ceremonies.



Graduates are encouraged to wear comfortable shoes.

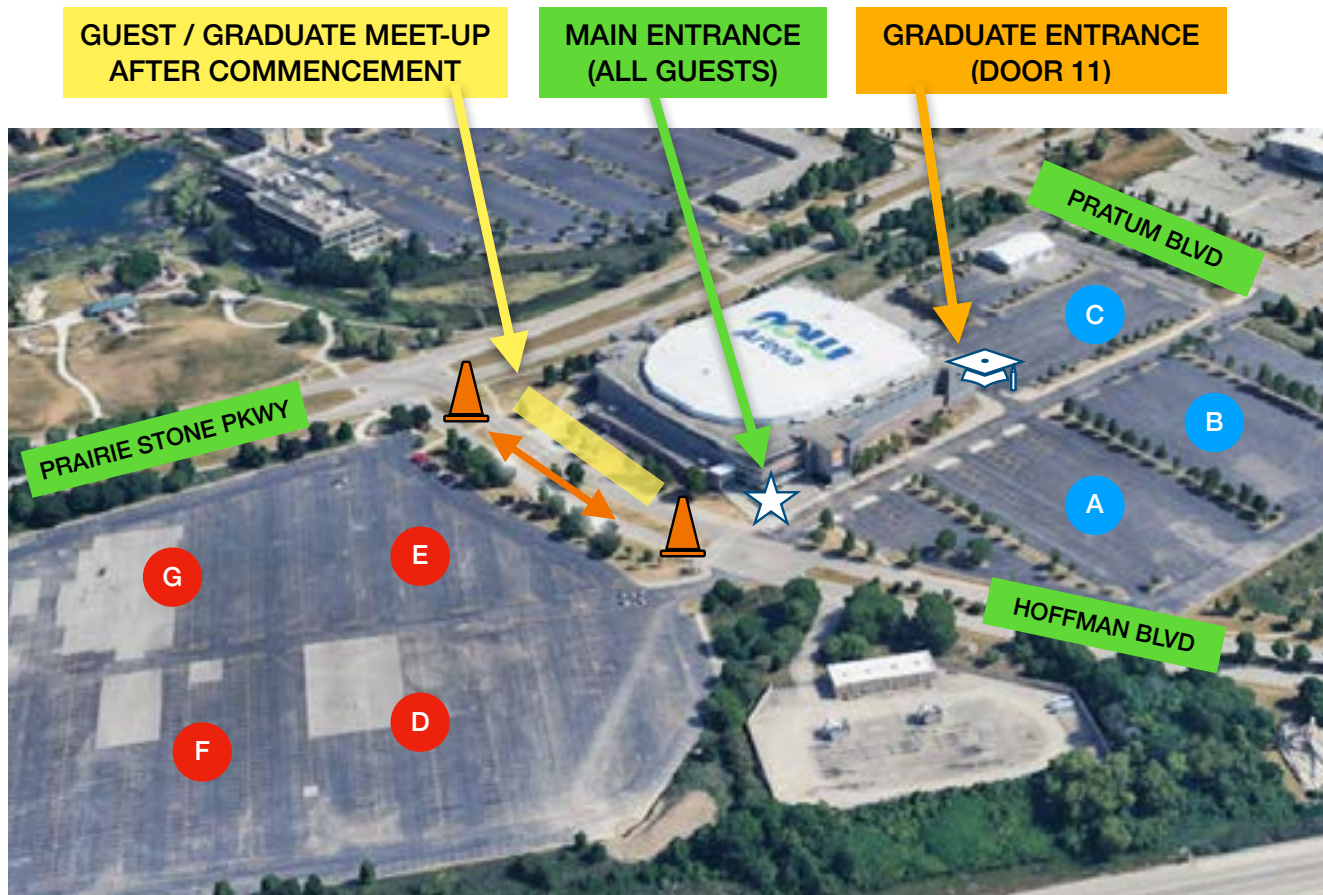
## METAL DETECTORS

All Guests and Graduates must pass through metal detectors to enter the venue. Please inform Security or Guest Services if you have any medical conditions that may be affected.

## BALLOON DROP

There will be a balloon drop during the close of the commencement ceremony. If you have a latex allergy, please alert a member of the WGU staff or Guest Services before the ceremony begins. They will assist you out of the arena prior to the balloon drop.

# NOW ARENA ENTRANCE & PARKING MAP



HOFFMAN BLVD. CLOSED  
FOR FOOT TRAFFIC

## PARKING

**PARKING IS FREE OF CHARGE AT NOW ARENA FOR THE  
WGU COMMENCEMENT**

LOTS **A-B-C** ENTER FROM PRATUM BLVD, North or South

LOTS **D-E-F-G** ENTER FROM HOFFMAN BLVD from the South

# COMMENCEMENT ETIQUETTE AND DECORUM



## ABOUT

Commencement Weekend is a memorable experience for graduates and their loved ones to celebrate their academic achievement. We want our graduates to experience a joyful, rewarding, and distraction-free ceremony that recognizes their hard work and the sacrifices they have made to reach this point. WGU believes that mutually respectful participation by graduates and their guests is the best way to accomplish this shared intention. In preparation for Commencement, WGU has outlined a protocol. Your and your guests' adherence will ensure a positive experience for all.

## ACADEMIC ATTIRE FOR GRADUATES

All graduating students wear approved academic attire that includes a cap, gown, and tassel. The official regalia color is navy. We encourage all graduates to wear comfortable yet professional dress attire under their gowns rather than casual clothing. Master's degree graduates will need a hood specific to their degree. Graduates affiliated with an academic honor society may wear society pins or honor cords on their gowns. With the exception of WGU scholarship pins, leis, and corsages, graduates should not wear other items or decoration on their academic regalia.

Take into consideration the following if decorating your cap for commencement: WGU does not allow content on caps that is considered, in WGU's sole discretion, obscene, vulgar, defamatory, hateful, inappropriate, profane, or that might disregard another's copyright or third-party rights. All decorations must lay flat on the cap.

## WGU COMMENCEMENT DECORUM POLICY

Please be advised any graduate or guest acting in a disruptive or disrespectful manner at WGU events, as determined by WGU in its sole discretion, may either not be allowed in the venue or may be escorted from the venue.




## MILITARY

Graduates who indicate active-duty military or veteran status on their ceremony RSVP form will receive military honor cords at the Graduate Check-in Area.

[Video: How to Wear Regalia](#)

## COMMENCEMENT ETIQUETTE

To promote a respectful, comfortable, and disturbance-free experience for our graduates and their guests, all attendees are asked to observe the following guidelines:

-  • Place your cell phone on vibrate or silent during the ceremony.
-  • Do not leave until the entire ceremony has ended.
-  • Cheer respectfully and avoid disruptive outbursts to allow the families and guests of other graduates to hear their graduate's name when read.

# WGU ACADEMIC CORDS AND HOODS

## GRADUATE CORDS:

Graduates who have earned honor cords may pick them up from the affiliated partner tables during the Alumni Celebration on Friday night or during grad check-in on Saturday. Please reach out to the appropriate departments for more information about your cord eligibility.



### MILITARY

Red, white, and blue



### SCHOLARSHIPS

Gold and white



### PHILANTHROPY

Navy, gold, and light blue



### WOMEN IN TECH

Purple and white



### NSLS

Black and silver

## MASTER HOODS:



### SALMON

Master of Science in Integrated  
Healthcare Management



### DRAB

School of Business



### APRICOT

Nursing



### SAGE

Master of Health Leadership



### BRIGHT GOLD

School of Technology



### LIGHT BLUE

School of Education

# GRADUATE CHECK-IN PROCEDURE STAGE PASS



The week of Commencement, you will be sent an email with a Stage Pass with your own personal QR code. This code must be available on your device and visible for check-in.

1. Once you receive this email, please take a screenshot so you can easily find and access this QR code.
2. Please make sure your device is with you, your device is charged, and the display is set on the brightest position.
3. When you arrive for check-in, please have your device out with the screen visible for the commencement ambassadors to see.
4. Your Stage Pass will be scanned before you cross the stage during the ceremony. Please have your Stage Pass ready to be scanned as you line up to cross the stage.

## SAMPLE STAGE PASS



**EMILY B.**

M.S. Secondary Ed. Mathematics  
WGU Graduate



# CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES!

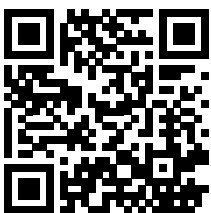
**Receive  
a WGU  
philanthropy  
cord!**



**Donate \$25 or more to the WGU Fellow Night Owl Scholarship Fund and receive a philanthropy cord.**

You can help current WGU students cross the finish line to graduation, too, by purchasing a philanthropy cord to wear with your cap and gown. All proceeds support the WGU Fellow Night Owl Scholarship Fund.

**Make your gift today!**



**Scan the QR Code or visit [wgu.edu/philanthropycords](https://wgu.edu/philanthropycords)**

Visit the WGU Advancement table at the Alumni Celebration or Commencement Check-in to pick up your philanthropy cord.

Have a question? Email [advancement@wgu.edu](mailto:advancement@wgu.edu).

# ONLINE VIEWING

Family and guests who are unable to attend in person may view the ceremony **online**. To watch the ceremony live, please visit the **online link** on Saturday, September 27, 2025.

[Live Commencement](#)

**DATE: SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2025**

**Leavitt School of Health and School of Education**

Ceremony Start Time: 9:30 a.m. EDT

**School of Technology and School of Business**

Ceremony Start Time: 1:30 p.m. EDT

## PHOTOGRAPHY

During the WGU Commencement, the Grad Team will be taking candid photos, speaker photos, and graduate portrait shots. There is no obligation to purchase.

**How to access your Commencement photos:**

A week after Commencement, the Grad Team will post commencement photos online.

Visit [thegradteam.com/events/wgu](https://thegradteam.com/events/wgu) to view Commencement photos.

## SPECIAL NOTE:

A graduate's appearance and participation are recorded at Commencement. This may include but is not limited to broadcast video, online web video, and photos in print materials. WGU may use some of these images for educational and informational purposes.

## CONTACT

During Commencement week, the most efficient way to reach the WGU Commencement Office is by sending an email to [commencement@wgu.edu](mailto:commencement@wgu.edu). You may also visit the [Commencement website](#).

Please [download](#) our Commencement app.



**DAVID L.**  
M.S. Curriculum and Instruction  
WGU Graduate

# REFER YOUR FRIENDS TO WGU!

Share WGU with  
your friends and  
family by using your  
Refer-a-Friend link.

You'll earn **500 points**  
in the Owl's Nest once  
they've completed  
their application!



Scan the QR Code or visit [wgu.onl/wgufriends](https://wgu.onl/wgufriends)  
to share WGU with your friends and family.