



Geisinger
Commonwealth
School of Medicine

Commencement

2021

Saturday, the Eighteenth of December
Two Thousand Twenty-One





Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine

celebrates the
conferring of

Master *of* Biomedical Sciences
degrees



To view our virtual ceremony video, visit [geisinger.edu/commencement](https://www.geisinger.edu/commencement).

A message from the president and dean



As a group, the Class of 2021 has a great deal to be proud of. You should count your new degree and diploma, of course, as well as your growth in skills and knowledge. I also want to praise you for two somewhat old-fashioned virtues — virtues you may not have even realized you had until COVID-19

undoubtedly disrupted many of your plans. The virtues are courage and fortitude.

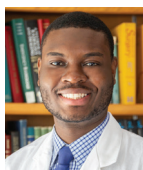
Aristotle said courage is the first of human virtues because it makes all others possible. Today we typically think of courage in terms of spectacular acts of physical bravery. Courage, however, is also seen when people refuse to be deterred, when they find new ways to achieve their goals. Inherently, courage is an act of the will. Once courage gets you going, fortitude is the strength and firmness of mind needed to see things through.

I mention these classical virtues because they have been so necessary for the Class of 2021. You are to be commended for resisting the urge to put your education on hold. And we applaud you for using every tool at your disposal to make your graduate school experience rich, meaningful and successful. Of course, I must give credit to our School of Graduate Education, whose staff worked tirelessly to ensure that, in addition to academic rigor, our first fully online MBS class had career- and community-building opportunities that are a hallmark of a Geisinger education.

As the post-crisis world begins to emerge, we will need imaginative, resourceful and courageous people to help shape it. You have proven that you have the intelligence and personal qualities needed to lead the way. Best wishes, Class of 2021. I know the future is in good hands as you set forth on your future endeavors.

— Steven J. Scheinman, MD, FACP, FASN
President and Dean of Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine
Executive Vice President and Chief Academic Officer of Geisinger

Commencement speaker



Akindede Olagunju, MD '19, MBS '14

Second-Year Diagnostic Radiology Resident, Brown University

Akindede Olagunju, MD '19, MBS '14, is a resident in diagnostic radiology at Brown University. He is a graduate of both Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine's Master of Biomedical Sciences (MBS) and Doctor of Medicine (MD) programs.

Throughout his time as a Geisinger Commonwealth student, Dr. Olagunju exemplified what it means to be called to serve as a physician. The academic and service records he compiled are impressive. He provided leadership and was always ready to help plan an event, pitch in on a service project or support

his fellow graduate and medical students. His empty seat on awards night in 2019 speaks to his energy and generosity. Most students are proud to receive one award; Dr. Olagunju was called to the podium five times.

As a student, he served as Graduate Student Council secretary and on Geisinger Commonwealth's Diversity Task Force. In addition to numerous other roles, he acted as Regional Education Academy for Careers in Health — Higher Education Initiative (REACH-HEI) historian and mentor. His academic record was similarly lengthy, as he, among other honors, presented research on liver cancer at the American Institute for Cancer Research.



2021

Commencement Program

Welcome	Erin Sutzko, EdD <i>Associate Dean for Graduate Education and Director of Graduate Admissions</i>
The National Anthem	Alana Rachelle Smith <i>MBS Class of 2021</i>
Introduction of president and dean	Erin Sutzko, EdD
President's remarks	Steven J. Scheinman, MD, FACP, FASN <i>Executive Vice President and Chief Academic Officer of Geisinger and President and Dean of Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine</i>
Introduction of commencement speaker	Gregory Shanower, PhD <i>Assistant Dean of Graduate Program and Curriculum Development</i>
Commencement address	Akindele Olagunju, MD '19, MBS '14 <i>Second-Year Diagnostic Radiology Resident, Brown University</i>
Awarding of degrees	
Presentation of candidates	Jennifer Boardman, PhD <i>Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for Graduate Education</i>
Announcing of candidates	Jennifer Boardman, PhD
Conferring of degrees	Steven J. Scheinman, MD, FACP, FASN
First-generation recognition	Michelle Schmude, EdD, MBA <i>Associate Dean for Admissions, Enrollment Management and Financial Aid</i>
Leadership awards	Erin Sutzko, EdD
Welcome to the Alumni Society	Christopher Boland <i>Director of Alumni Relations</i>
Alumni addresses	Eshiemomoh Osilama, MBS '19 <i>MD Class of 2024</i>
Final remarks from the program director	Gregory Shanower, PhD
Student engagement slide show	Graduate Student Council

History

Geisinger Commonwealth was established through the grassroots efforts of visionary individuals who foresaw what a community-based medical school would bring to the region and worked to make it a reality. Their goal was to provide more physicians and improved healthcare resources for the people of northeast and central Pennsylvania. The vision was to create a unique medical education experience that focused on caring for people in the context of their lives and in their community.

The roots of Geisinger Commonwealth began in 2004 with the Founding Seven. This group included area physicians Charles Bannon, MD, Gerald Tracy, MD, and Robert Wright, MD; businessmen and community leaders Robert Naismith, PhD, and Gerard Joyce; and attorneys Mark Perry and Michael Costello. The Northeastern Pennsylvania Medical Education Development Consortium was established by 2005. The consortium included business, medical, community and government representatives. After acquiring funding from sources including the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania, and other state, federal and private philanthropic sources, the Commonwealth Medical Education Corporation was formed.

The Commonwealth Medical College (TCMC) was incorporated in 2008 and welcomed its first class of Doctor of Medicine (MD) degree students and Master of Biomedical Sciences (MBS) degree students in August 2009.

In April 2011, TCMC opened the 185,000-square-foot Medical Sciences Building in Scranton that houses the medical and graduate degree programs.

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education granted TCMC full accreditation on June 27, 2014, and the Liaison Committee for Medical Education granted TCMC full accreditation on July 7, 2014.

TCMC integrated with Geisinger on Jan. 1, 2017, and became Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine.

Geisinger Commonwealth has administrative and educational space at hospitals in Atlantic City, Danville, Sayre, Scranton and Wilkes-Barre, as well as in Doylestown at the Pennsylvania Biotechnology Center of Bucks County. The school has five regional campuses: AtlantiCare, Central, Guthrie, North and South, which are integral to the college's community-based education. Community engagement is part of the fiber of Geisinger Commonwealth. More than 1,500 clinical faculty members throughout the region provide students with early clinical experiences and training across the 4 years of medical education. Families throughout the region are generous in allowing students to follow them so they can appreciate the social context and the impact of illness on the lives of patients. Students are required to pursue research projects in quality improvement and community health.



Graduate Education Leadership

Administration

Tanja K. Adonizio, MD, Associate Dean for Student Affairs

Amy Allison, MPH, MLS, Associate Dean for Library Services and Library Director

Lauri Andress, MPH, JD, PhD, Associate Dean for Equity, Inclusion and Community Engagement

Anna M. Arvay, CPA, MBA, Vice President for Finance & Administration and Chief Financial Officer

Jennifer Boardman, PhD, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for Graduate Education

Jim Franceschelli, Associate Dean for Educational Informational Technology

Jackie Ghormoz, MSW, CSW, Assistant Dean of Students

Leighton Y. Huey, MD, Associate Dean for Behavioral Health Integration and Community Care Transformation

William Jeffries, PhD, Vice Dean for Medical Education and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Venard Scott Koerwer, PhD, EdD, Vice Dean for Graduate Education and Vice President for Strategy and Planning

John Kulp, PhD, Regional Assistant Dean for Doylestown Campus

Sonia Lobo, PhD, RYT, Associate Dean for Research and Scholarship

Gerald Maloney, DO, Chief Medical Officer for Geisinger Hospitals and Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs for Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine

Steven J. Scheinman, MD, FACP, FASN, Executive Vice President and Chief Academic Officer of Geisinger and President and Dean of Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine

Michelle Schmude, EdD, MBA, Associate Dean for Admissions, Enrollment Management and Financial Aid

Gregory Shanower, PhD, Assistant Dean of Graduate Program and Curriculum Development

Rebecca S. Slangan, MBA, Administrative Director

Erin Sutzko, EdD, Associate Dean for Graduate Education and Director of Graduate Admissions

Michelle Thompson, MD, Associate Chief Academic Officer for Graduate Medical Education (GME), Associate Dean for GME and Designated Institutional Official

Janet M. Townsend, MD, Senior Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs

Nicole Woll, PhD, Associate Chief Academic Officer for Interprofessional Education and Associate Dean for Faculty and Continuing Professional Development

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Steven J. Scheinman, MD, FACP, FASN,
*Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine
President and Dean (ex officio)*

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Robert E. Wright, MD

Steven J. Scheinman, MD, FACP, FASN, *ex officio*

Ying-Ju Sung, PhD, *ex officio*



2021

Master of Biomedical Sciences graduates

Rose Rachel Abraham

Jersey City, NJ
Rutgers University, BA

Stephen O. Adeniyi

Columbus, NJ
Rowan University, BS

Annabel Socorro Alfonseca

Teaneck, NJ
Rutgers University, BA

Adeola Aminat Animasahun

Burtonsville, MD
University of Pittsburgh, BS

Daniel Oluwatoyin Ayodele

Carrollton, TX
University of North Texas, BS

Zaib Javid Baig

Bensalem, PA
Pennsylvania State University, BS

Rizelyn A. Benito

Iselin, NJ
Rutgers University, BS

Reginald Bernard

Binghamton, NY
State University of New York at Binghamton, BS

Andrew M. Bloh

Somers Point, NJ
LaSalle University, BS

Randy Bonilla

Wilkes-Barre, PA
Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania, BS

Brittany Nicole Davis

Huntington Beach, CA
California State University of Stanislaus, BA/BS

Ofonime Emah

Elkridge, MD
Virginia State University, BS

Uzoamaka Vanessa Eziri *

Bronx, NY
Hunter College, BA

Jennifer A. Fasheun

Brooklyn, NY
Temple University, BS

Kelly Elizabeth Finno *

Perkasie, PA
University of Scranton, BS

Cheryl Annora Frazier

Havelock, NC
North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, BS
University of Scranton, MS

Chantel Victoria Golding

Hollywood, FL
Florida Atlantic University, BS

Brian M. Grodecki

Wayne, PA
Williams College, BS

Narges Gul Mohammad

Scranton, PA
Marywood University, BS

Rachita Gupta

Woodbridge, CT
Vanderbilt University, BA

Zechariah Hanna

Wilkes-Barre, PA
Bloomsburg University, BS

Memona Haroon

Wilmington, DE
University of Delaware, BA

Shinyoung Hwang

Round Lake, IL
University of Illinois at Chicago, BS

Isra Amin Ibrahim

Miramar, FL
Florida International University, BS

Mahamed A. Jama

Saint Paul, MN
University of Minnesota - Twin Cities, BS

Rachelle Jean

Brooklyn, NY
Spelman College, BS

Kennedy Bucheek Johnson

Albany, GA
Georgia State University, BS

Yvette Johnson

Long Beach, CA
California State University Dominguez Hills, BS

Anmol Kaur

Denver, CO
University of Denver, BS

Chanel R. Knight

Spokane, WA
Whitman College, BA

Camille Alexandra Kotcho

Jermyn, PA
Marywood University, BS

Ching Yue Sheryn Low

New Milford, PA
Nanyang Technological University, BS
Thomas Edison State University, BA

Mannaa I. Mannaa

State College, PA
The Pennsylvania State University, BS

Chloé Elvira Mballa

Silver Spring, MD
University of Maryland – Baltimore County, BA

Marissa Elizabeth McHale

Scranton, PA
John Carroll University, BS

Rhiannon McKinney

Sunbury, PA
Penn State University, BS

Jason Lee McLeod

Foster, RI
Virginia Commonwealth University, BS

Taylor Sam Mewhiney

Medfield, MA
Sacred Heart University, BS



Gabrielle Lissette Muniz

Bronx, NY
City University of New York: Lehman College, BA

Cathie-Allegra Zimi Nkabyo

Kennesaw, GA
University of Missouri, BS

Ashley Marie Nunez *

Brooklyn, NY
Pace University, BA

Amanda Nwachukwu

Williamstown, NJ
Monmouth University, BS

Ifeoluwa Omolade Oke

Bowie, MD
University of Maryland Eastern Shore, BS

Aleya Osman

Upper Darby, PA
Drexel University, BS

Goral M. Patel

York, PA
Pennsylvania State University, BS

Nica Ramy *

Los Angeles, CA
California State University, Northridge, BS

Bryce Daniel Roscoe

Washington, PA
Pennsylvania State University, BS

Alana Rachelle Smith

Okemos, MI
Michigan State University, BS

Mary Katherine Spohn

Parma, OH
Cleveland State University, BS

Grace Tieko

Westerville, OH
University of Toledo, BS

Theodore James Tucker

Macungie, PA
Temple University, BS

Daniela Isabel Velasquez

Silver Spring, MD
Towson University, BS

Eric Mwaura Watiri

Worcester, MA
Worcester State University, BS

Joenly Y. Yapul

Allentown, PA
East Stroudsburg University, BS

Megan Yeung

Glen Head, NY
University of Pittsburgh, BS

** Recognized for their work on Graduate Student Council.*

Note: All students listed in this program will not necessarily complete all graduation requirements by December 18, 2021.

Founders Society

In the early days of Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine, a group of individuals, organizations, corporations and foundations stepped forward to ensure the success of the Commonwealth's new medical college through generous contributions for student scholarships and operations. We are sincerely grateful for their support and recognize them as members of our Founders Society.

Myer M. Alperin
Michael J. & Louise D. Altier
Anonymous
Pat & John Atkins
Dr. & Mrs. Charles J. Bannon
Benco Dental Company
Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania
Dr. Harmar D. & Leslie W. Brereton
Alice Bulger, Dr. Weimin Chen & Louis Shapiro
Geisinger Community Medical Center
Geisinger Community Medical Center medical staff
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The medical staff of Mercy Hospital
Cliff & Ruth Melberger
Mercy Health Partners
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Mohegan Sun at Pocono Downs
Barbara Monick
Moses Taylor Health Care System
Moses Taylor Hospital medical staff
Morey & Sondra Myers
Dr. Robert W. & Claudia B. Naismith
Northeastern Eye Institute
Northeastern Rehabilitation Associates PC
The Oppenheim Family
Penn Security Bank & Trust Company
The Roy W. Piper Charitable Trust
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PrimeMed PC
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Alexander Lalos & Edward Sherwin
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Scranton Area Foundation Inc.
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Mr. Andrew & Dr. Susan Sordoni
Susquehanna Health
Taylor Nursing and Rehabilitation Center Fund of The
Luzerne Foundation
Dr. & Mrs. Gerald P. Tracy
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Wilkes-Barre General Hospital
Steve & Libby Wojdak
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The Wright Center for Graduate Medical Education
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Community-based
Patient-centered
Innovative education

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