

# HERZING UNIVERSITY COMMENCEMENT



**Friday, January 23rd 2026, 10:00 AM ET**

John S. Knight Center

Akron, OH

# Commencement Ceremony

## ~ Processional ~

### Welcome & Introduction

**Bill Cassidy**  
Regional Director of Operations

### Student of the Semester Award

**Tylar Epps**  
Associate of Applied Science in Nursing

### Commencement Speaker

**Judge Alison Breaux**  
Summit County Court of Common Pleas

### Conferring of Diplomas

**Stephanie Newman**  
Director of Campus Operations

### Hooding of Master & Doctoral Candidates

**Renée Herzing and Stephanie Newman**  
University President and Director of Campus Operations

### Distinguished Alumni Award and Alumni Pledge

**Julie Vavrek**  
Doctor of Nursing Practice, December 2025

### Charge to Graduates & Closing Remarks

**Renée Herzing**  
University President

## ~ Recessional ~

## Commencement Speaker



**Judge Alison Breaux**  
Summit County Court of Common Pleas

Judge Alison Breaux serves as a judge on the Summit County Court of Common Pleas in the General Division, overseeing both felony criminal cases and civil matters. She was elected to the bench in 2017 and has earned a reputation of being firm but fair, compassionate and consistent.

Judge Breaux lived in many other states in the US and even overseas in Japan while growing up, before moving to Ohio to attend high school. She is a graduate of Kent State University, where she earned her bachelors degree, and the University of Akron School of Law.

Within one year of being elected to her current position, in 2018, Judge Breaux created the first felony mental health court in Summit County, called HOPE Court, and since its inception over 115 individuals with severe mental illnesses have graduated successfully - going on to manage their illness while living stable, fulfilling and happy lives.

Dedicated to her community, Judge Breaux also serves on the board of the Akron Canton Regional Foodbank and the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

## Distinguished Alumni



**Julie Vavrek**  
Faculty  
Herzing University  
Doctor of Nursing Practice, December 2025

Julie Vavrek joined Herzing University in 2019 as a professor and nclex coach. Julie started her Nursing career at Akron Children's Hospital in 2013 where she worked as a Float RN. She obtained her Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) in 2018 and her certification as a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner, specializing in Primary Care.

Julie recently graduated from Herzing University with her Doctor in Nursing Practice (DNP). She is a member of Society of Simulation in Healthcare and Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing. Julie was awarded Educator of the Year in 2023.

In her free time, she enjoys spending time supporting her children in their travel baseball and softball and traveling with her husband.

## Charge to Graduates



**Renée Herzing**  
University President  
Herzing University

Renée succeeded her father, Henry Herzing, as president of the Herzing University System on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009. After attaining a bachelor's degree from Brown University, she taught abroad in Scotland and Germany for nine years before completing her Masters in Business Administration.

She has worked in various positions at Herzing University at the campus level, including registrar, director of admissions, and president of Herzing University online. In addition, Ms. Herzing has overseen the System's online, strategic planning, and information technology initiatives. She launched the System's Online division in 2003, which has grown from 100 students to over 2500 students.

In education, she is on the Steering Committee of the Higher Education Regional Alliance (HERA), the Board of WAICU (Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities), and a Trustee of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee. Renée served on the Board of Directors for the Career Education Colleges and Universities (CECU) and was the Chair of its Grassroots Committee. Additionally, she is active in national educational idea-sharing groups.

In the business community, she is a member of YPO (Young Presidents' Organization), an international organization of over 20,000 CEOs, where she has held a variety of leadership roles since 2011. She is also a member of the Greater Milwaukee Committee (GMC), on the Steering Committee of Milwaukee Women, Inc. and a member of TEMPO Milwaukee.

Outside of work, Renée enjoys playing rock music in a band with her family, traveling, entertaining, learning languages, and spending as much time as possible with her two children, including horseback riding with her daughter.

# Roster of Candidates

This Commencement Program is a roster of candidates, not an official list of graduates. Appropriate degrees and honors are only awarded to candidates who successfully complete all requirements for program completion by established deadlines.

Herzing University's official designator for degree conferral is the student's permanent academic record and is displayed on the official transcript.

## Certificate

### Certificate in Information technology Technical Support

Nicholas Johnson

## Diplomas

### Diploma in Health and Human Services

Arletta Crumby

Marcia King

Kara Hye *h*

Tassionette Perryman

Kenneice Kelley *h*

Natasha Westbrook

### Diploma in Insurance Billing and Coding Specialist

Erika Allard

Laticia McQueen

Kristin Bittner

Emily Page *h*

Ashley Denton

Elizabeth Rine

Floyd Holmes

Sabrina Roper

Nina Hunt

## Diplomas

### Diploma in Medical Assisting

Cheyenne Arnio	Takiyah Jackson
DeLise Brown	Kym Markley <i>h</i>
Tori Cardiel <i>h</i>	Mariah Mills <i>h</i>
Kimberly Conrad <i>h</i>	Veronica Modd <i>h</i>
Mallory Crabtree <i>h</i>	Alyssa Orosco
Audrey Flay	Minkey Rai <i>h</i>
Michellae Harris	Shalana Suggs
Ashley Hathaway <i>h</i>	Natalie Washnock
Leslie Henry <i>h</i>	Desiray Winning <i>h</i>

### Diploma in Medical Office Administration

Sierah Flowers <i>h</i>	Claudia Jacobs
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### Diploma in Practical Nursing

Misty Bishop <i>h</i>	Ceara Hooks
Alienne Desulme	Vayola Kwokwei
Brooke Eitner	Qiana Marks
Brittney Emerick	Esther Moore
Sindy Escobar <i>h</i>	DaVonne Mosley
Brooke Fleming	Anastasia Pollard
Cassie Green <i>h</i>	Faith Riley
Brittany Harris	Gustavia Winlock <i>h</i>
Aaliyah Hawthorne	Chloe Zesiger

## Diplomas

### Diploma in Sterile Processing

Mikal Clifton	Cecelia Marks
JaiDay Davis	Sequoia Mitchell
Jennifer Foster	Naajee Mix <i>h</i>
Diona Gould <i>h</i>	Kirstin Quickle
Paula Howdyshell	Jean Reed
Tiara Johnson	Shakira Rogers
Mykel Jones <i>h</i>	Tiana Thomas
Tyler Key	Darian Woodson
Willesha Lewis	

## Associate Degrees

### Associate of Science in Health Information Management

Tara Miller	Melissa Sine
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### Associate of Science in Healthcare Administration

Sharon Crew	Ashanty Vazquez-Pereira
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### Associate of Science in Insurance Billing and Coding Specialist

Thelma Anthony	Kaitlyn Mutzabaugh
Kimyhania Hendon	

### Associate of Science in Medical Assisting Services

Breauna Campbell	Mmonga Msombo
Lorayna Hamann	Alethia Smith-Fast

## Associate Degrees

### Associate of Science in Medical Office Administration

Nicole Blankenship

Kera Miller

### Associate of Science in Nursing

Ma'Nasja Adams

Angelique Jones

Kayla Andrews-Walters

Nicole Jones

Kylee Barnett

Chibuzo Keke

Kyah Belt

Angel Lenzy

Natasha Bonney

Megan Lohr

Nathan Camper

Sara Lynch

Reilly Cheeseman

Katelyn Minor

Samantha Cipolla

Leah Moore

Monique Coleman

Connor Mork

Madisyn Cover

Madelyn Oakes

Nichelle Edwards

Morgan Rardon

Tylar Epps

Ashley Rice

Claire Eulett

Adreanna Sanchez

Mikayla Farrar

Jonathan Semrau

Noel Feddersen

Kayla Todd

Morgan Gray

Michelle Ustupski

Katey Gunter

April Valenti

Shyanne Gutscher

Maricela Venegas

Megan Hickman

Jordan Wasko

Nevaeh Hixenbaugh

Justin Wellock

Erica Hurst

Heather Westfall

Kelly Johnson

### Associate of Science in Business Management

Jennifer Elberty

RayJa Jackson

Erica Hathaway

## Associate Degrees

### Associate of Science in General Studies Pre-Nursing

Megan Allen  
Javarri Boyer  
Darnell Echols  
Tiffany McMillan

Dyleasha Mills  
Tara Nettleton  
August Taylor  
Bryce Thompson

### Associate of Science in Health and Human Services

Shanae Gills  
Tre McIntyre

Shavon Williams

## Bachelor's Degrees

### Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice

Belinda Penamon *m*

### Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity

Gage Nuttall *c*

### Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences

Niru Chhetri *c*

### Bachelor of Science in Healthcare Administration

Stephanie DeMore *s*

M'kenzie Wilson

## Bachelor's Degrees

### Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Professional Studies

Jose Aguado <i>c</i>	Zachary Kendall
Yulanda Danielly <i>s</i>	James Shetler <i>m</i>
Andrew Graham	

### Bachelor of Science in Legal Studies

Sashae Fordham *m*

### Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Ciara Algarin-Fisher	Armani Moss <i>c</i>
BreOnna Armstead <i>c</i>	Karly Niess
Yashica Banks <i>s</i>	Grant Pappas
Samantha Boyle <i>m</i>	Ayala Plummer <i>c</i>
Christine Ciobotaru <i>c</i>	Patrick Reilly <i>m</i>
Lisa Cowsette	Roger Rose <i>c</i>
Markus Cruz <i>c</i>	D'Shoantae Shinholster
Suelana Dominguez	Nicole Taylor <i>m</i>
Courtney Downing	Victoria Taylor
Carolanne Finch <i>c</i>	Chelsea Terry <i>s</i>
Celeste Goldie	Jacqueline Thompson <i>m</i>
Adriana Guadamuz <i>c</i>	A'Sharae Travis <i>c</i>
Sirena Haynes	Aubrey Vacha <i>c</i>
Maya Lanier	Cameron Vasbinder
Raphael Mbah <i>s</i>	Sharon Wanjiku <i>s</i>
Tierra McCray	Nicole Wetherill <i>s</i>
Alison Miller <i>m</i>	

### Bachelor of Science in Technology Management

Courtney Ricker <i>m</i>	Jasmine Watts <i>m</i>
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## Master's Degrees

### Master of Business Administration

Chourtnee Mack

### Master of Science in Healthcare Administration

Jelena Blagojevic

Melanie Rivers Davis

### Master of Science in Nursing

Rachel Adams

Angela Misanko

Cortlin Davidson

Jennifer Swecker

Jean Dumond

### Master of Science in Nursing in Adult Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner

Kaylee Sharkey

### Master of Science in Nursing in Adult Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner

Courtney St. Clair

### Master of Science in Nursing in Family Nurse Practitioner

Rebecca Kline

Sharon Osborne

Jennifer Mazanek

Jared Yun

### Master of Science in Nursing in Nursing Education

Rebekah Tasker

## Master's Degrees

### Master of Science in Nursing in Pediatric Nurse Practitioner

Ashley Craddick

### Master of Science in Nursing in Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

Aracelis Bell	Alexandra Perris
Esther Bernard	Cierra Richardson
Veronica Chambers	Danita Swinney
Jamie Darr	Jena Taylor
Amanda Distin	Trevor Tomlin
Michelle Gurley	Bobbi Towe
Victoria Hartley	Caitlyn Verhovec
Gertrude NWokorie	Teara Young

### Master of Social Work

Trashawn Anderson

## Post Master's Certificate

### Post Masters Certificate in Accounting and Finance

Shawn Crosby

### Post Masters Certificate in Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

Stacy Lejeune

Nikki Mendoza

## Doctorate Degrees

### Doctor of Nursing Practice

Tanisha Butler

Julie Vavrek

Herman Funk

# Key to Honors

## Master & Doctoral Degree

Graduates receive the Masters and Doctoral degree hood as a recognition of academic achievement.

## Bachelor Degree Honors

*s* = Summa Cum Laude (*with greatest honor*)

A cumulative grade point average of 3.90-4.00 is recognized by a gold stole that is part of the graduate's academic regalia.

*m* = Magna Cum Laude (*with high honor*)

A cumulative grade point average of 3.70-3.89 is recognized by a double gold cord that is part of the graduate's academic regalia.

*c* = Cum Laude (*with honor*)

A cumulative grade point average of 3.50-3.69 is recognized by a double silver cord that is part of the graduate's academic regalia.

## Associate Degree and Diploma Honors

*h* = Honors A cumulative grade point average of 3.50 to 4.00. is recognized by double white cord that is part of the graduate's academic regalia.

## Alpha Beta Kappa National Honor Society (ABK)

† = ABK National Honor Society

Alpha Beta Kappa National Honor Society membership is open to undergraduate students who have a grade point average of 3.75 or higher and are recognized at commencement by wearing red, white and blue honor cords. Additional qualifications for membership include leadership and service in class and school activities, and personal integrity and good moral character. The purpose of the society is to help schools, colleges and universities how-so-ever organized and named, and their students and alumni through the encouragement and recognition of superior academic work and laboratory training in honorable fields of endeavor.

## Phi Alpha Social Work Honor Society (PA)

‡ = PA Social Work Honor Society

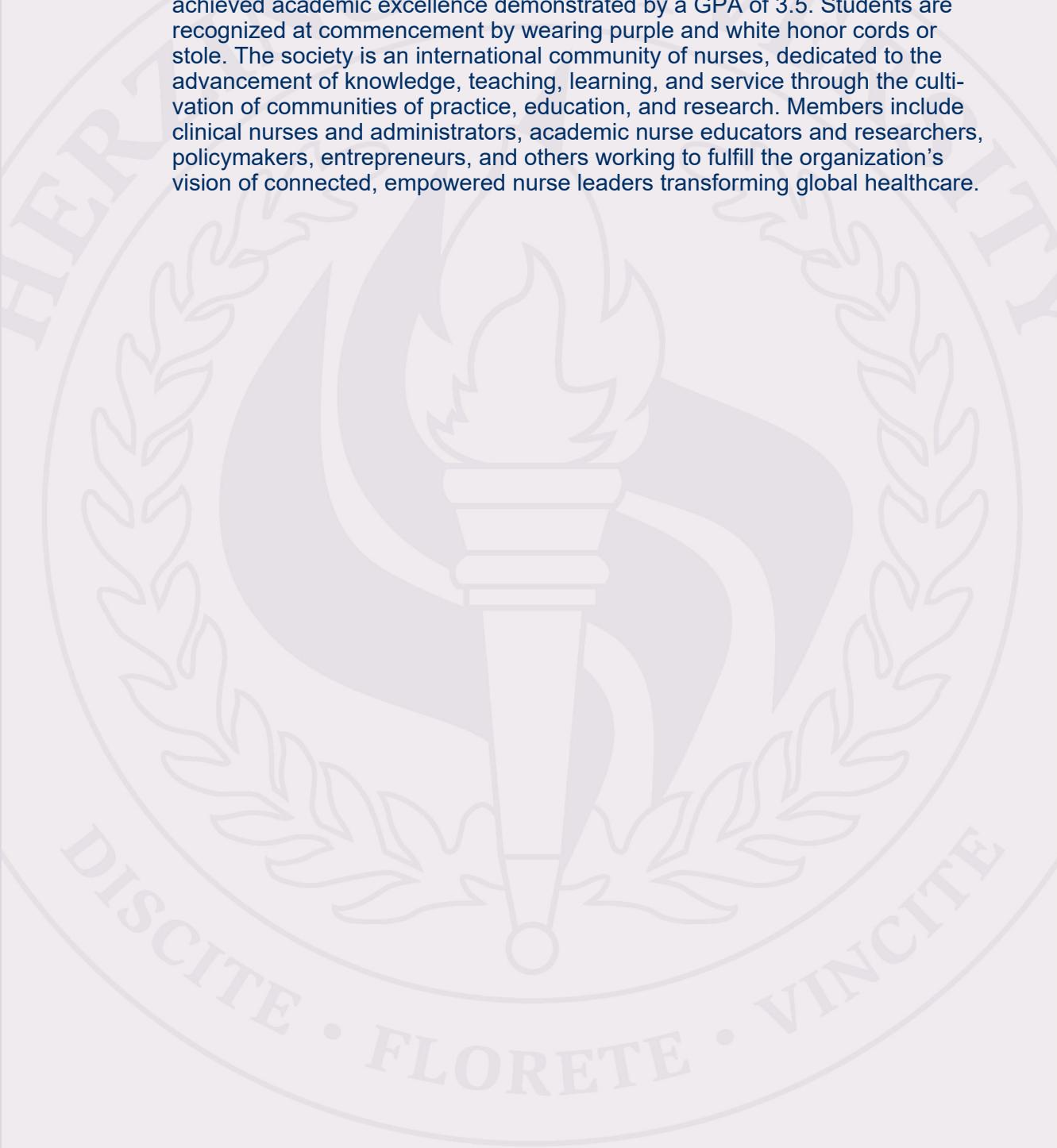
The highest honor one can receive in Social Work at Herzing University is membership in the Delta Kappa Sigma Chapter of Phi Alpha International Honor Society. Members must earn a 3.5 cumulative GPA, have completed at least one-third of the program, and have completed 10 hours of community service. Phi Alpha fosters high standards of education for social workers and invites into membership those who have attained excellence in scholarship and achievement in social work. Students are recognized at commencement by wearing a blue and gold honor cord or stole. The purpose of Phi Alpha Honor Society is to provide a closer bond among students of social work and promote humanitarian goals and ideals.

## Key to Honors

### **Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing (STT)**

$\Sigma$  = STT International Honor Society

Induction into the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing is open to undergraduate nursing students who have completed one half of their nursing curriculum, achieved academic excellence demonstrated by a GPA of 3.0 and rank in the upper 35% of their class; membership is open to graduate nursing students who have completed one quarter of their program and have achieved academic excellence demonstrated by a GPA of 3.5. Students are recognized at commencement by wearing purple and white honor cords or stole. The society is an international community of nurses, dedicated to the advancement of knowledge, teaching, learning, and service through the cultivation of communities of practice, education, and research. Members include clinical nurses and administrators, academic nurse educators and researchers, policymakers, entrepreneurs, and others working to fulfill the organization's vision of connected, empowered nurse leaders transforming global healthcare.



## Alumni Pledge

### I Acknowledge:

As a proud Herzing University alum, I am part of a lifelong community built on mentorship, leadership, and support. Empowered by my education, I will inspire others, foster inclusivity, and create meaningful change.

### I Pledge Therefore:

To embody the P.R.I.C.E. of Success—Professionalism, Respect, Integrity, Caring, and Engagement—in all aspects of my life, making a positive impact wherever I go.

**Graduates, welcome to the Herzing University Alumni Circle! Keep in touch and access your no-cost alumni benefits!**



[careerconnect.herzing.edu](http://careerconnect.herzing.edu)

**[i'm] possible**



# Executive Committee

## **Renée Herzing, M.B.A.**

University President

## **Nigel Longworth, M.S.**

Chief Information Officer

## **Kitty Kautzer, ED.D.**

Chief Academic Officer

## **Erik Parks, B.S.**

Chief Operations Officer

## **Clay Gillespie, B.S.**

Chief Marketing Officer

## **Simha Sudarshan, M.B.A., J.D.**

Chief Financial Officer

The faculty, staff, and administration of Herzing University cordially welcome graduates, their families, and their friends to this festive occasion and extend to each graduate heartfelt congratulations and best wishes on the journey ahead!



# Locations

**Herzing University is an Institution of Higher Learning with Locations in the Following States**

## **Alabama**

Herzing University, Birmingham

## **Florida**

Herzing University, Orlando  
Herzing University, Tampa

## **Georgia**

Herzing University, Atlanta

## **Louisiana**

Herzing University, New Orleans

## **Minnesota**

Herzing University, Minneapolis

## **Ohio**

Herzing University, Akron

## **Tennessee**

Herzing University, Nashville  
Herzing University, Clarksville

## **Wisconsin**

Herzing University, Brookfield  
Herzing University, Kenosha  
Herzing University, Madison  
Herzing University, Online

Herzing University Central Administration  
275 W. Wisconsin Ave. Suite 210  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 53203  
[www.herzing.edu](http://www.herzing.edu)

Herzing University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission.  
To learn more, please go to [www.hlcommission.org](http://www.hlcommission.org)



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