

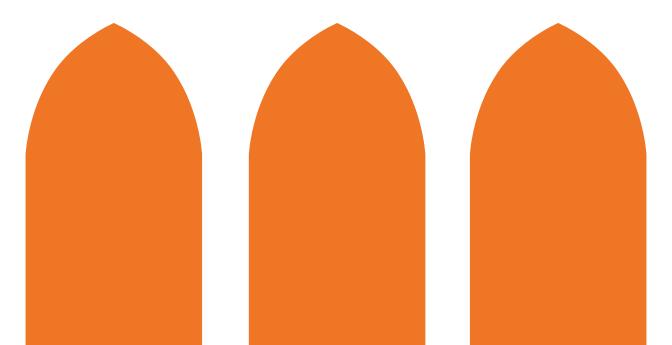
Commencement

FOR THE CLASS OF 2024

SATURDAY, MAY 11 9:00 A.M.

YOUNG-WISE MEMORIAL STADIUM

CONWAY, ARKANSAS



COMMENCEMENT

Processional* Toccata Marziale

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

The Reverend Ellen R. Alston '82 Invocation*

Chaplain of the College

Welcome Karen Petersen

President

Hank Neely '83

Chair, Board of Trustees

David Sutherland '81

Provost and Professor of Mathematics

Special Music Hendrix College Choir

Andrew Morgan, Associate Professor of Music,

Conductor Sunrise

Norah Jones & Lee Alexander; arr. Rob Lane

Autumn Alsup, soloist

Conferral of the Honorary Degree President Petersen

RONNIE D. WILLIAMS '76 **Provost Sutherland**

> Ronnie D. Williams '76 Remarks

Conferral of Degrees in Course President Petersen

The family of each graduate may rise as the name of the graduate is called.

Provost Sutherland

Gina Bergfeld '03

Associate Professor of Economics & Business

Brenda Adams Registrar

Alma Mater* arr. Metcalf, Eppes, Coffman

Hendrix College, we will love thee Through the years to come As we love thee now today While our hearts are young.

Kindly is thy spirit always Friendship and good cheer Make thee, Hendrix College, to us Alma Mater dear.

Benediction* Rev. Alston

Hendrix College Wind Ensemble Recessional*

Gretchen Renshaw, Associate Professor of Music,

Conductor Crown Imperial

William Walton (1902-1983); arr. Bocook

Marshal of the College | Jennifer Peszka

Professor of Psychology

Assistant Marshals Rod Miller

Professor of Art History

Damon Spayde

Professor of Physics

Student Marshals Emma Callahan

Quynh Nguyen

Ally Ross

Elaine Schomburg Hannia Valero **Emilie Watkins**

Student Ushers Tommy Caldarera

> **Avery Caldwell** Piper Fisherman Alistair Luke Aaron Nguyen Luke Simpson Lathan Smalley Hailey Zelaya

Jayson Connor Crumpler '24 **Standard Bearer**

Recipient of the President's Medal

Immediately following the ceremony, the Hendrix College faculty will sponsor a reception honoring the 2024 graduating class at the Grove Gymnasium Sculpture Plaza in front of the Aquatic Center. Family and friends of the graduates are invited to attend. *In the event of rain, the reception will be moved into the Recreation Gym.*



RONNIE D. WILLIAMS '76

Ronnie D. Williams retired in 2021 after four decades of service to the University of Central Arkansas (UCA) campus community, beginning in 1980 as Assistant Dean of Students and continuing through various roles, including Director of Minority Affairs (1990), Assistant to the President (1992), Vice President of Student Services (1996), and Chief Diversity Officer (2013). The UCA Board of Trustees honored him by renaming the institution's campus center the Ronnie Williams Student Center and announcing an endowed scholarship in his name.

Active in civic life and community leadership, Williams has chaired the Conway Area Chamber of Commerce and the Arkansas Educational Television Commission; and served on the Arkansas Supreme Court Committee on Professional Conduct and the boards of the Arkansas Community Foundation and the Faulkner County

Shelter for Abused and Battered Women (now known as Rise House). In 2018, he received the Guy W. Murphy Distinguished Service Award, the highest recognition from the Conway Area Chamber presented yearly to a person who has demonstrated special service to the community.

A native of Menifee, Williams graduated from Hendrix College in 1976 and earned a master's degree from Arkansas State University. His 2022 book, *Markham Street*, chronicles his family's quest for justice surrounding the death of his brother, Marvin Williams, who died in police custody in 1960.

Williams continues to make his home in Menifee with his wife, Connie, who works on the staff of Bailey Library at Hendrix College.

MAJOR

GRADUATE

HOMETOWN

GRADUATE HOMETOWN

David K. Blackburn Murfreesboro, TN Adam Irving Bland Athens, TX Nashville, TN **Brandon Isaac Curtis** Kyler D. Greenlee Springdale, AR James Tanner Hartsfield Howe, TX **Gunner Drake Hopkins** Newbern, TN Benjamin Thomas Patterson Plano, TX Nathan Christopher Silva Katy, TX

GRADUATE

Samantha Bailey Broussard §

Lilly Grace Brown

Eleanor James Burks † *

Kennedi Ellen Burns

Jacob Timothy Burton

Grace Capooth † * ❖

BACHELOR OF ARTS

MAJOR

HOMETOWN

Computer Science Taylor Duane Aishman Greenwood, AR **Economics and Business** Jad Al Awar Beyrouth, Lebanon Health Science Megan Dae Alexander Huntsville, AR Health Science Feross Ahmad Al-Hindi † * Jonesboro, AR Computer Science and Spanish Alivia Allen Little Rock, AR Sociology/Anthropology emph. Anthropology Lauren Cross Allen † * ❖ Spring Hill, TN Biochemistry & Molecular Biology Sannan Mohammad Arif Searcy, AR Biology Ethan August Armour Dallas, TX Politics and English-Literary Studies Maumelle, AR Keeley Lenore Ausburn ‡ (Accounting Jacob Joaquin Avila Waldron, AR Biochemistry & Molecular Biology Drake Allen Bacchus † Lamar, AR **Economics and Business** Alec Joseph Bailey Anna, TX Humble, TX **Economics and Business** Hannah Marie Bailey Health Science Lona Bailey Humble, TX **Economics and Business Bryson Cole Bales** Round Rock, TX Mathematics **Aubrey Bennett** Conway, AR Chemical Physics Zach Bernheimer † Vancouver, WA Biochemistry & Molecular Biology Olivia Michelle Bice Russellville, AR Psychology Isabella Bieligk† Tulsa, OK Politics Lily Katherine Vander Laan Black † * ♦ Hastings, NE Biology and Spanish Madison Taylor Blevins ‡ ⋄ Fort Smith, AR Fayetteville, AR Psychology Kennedy Ann Bobbitt Rhett Murphy Booher Computer Science Little Rock, AR Biochemistry & Molecular Biology Emily Anne Bosché Jonesboro, AR

Health Science Interdisciplinary Studies Health Science **Politics** Psychology Accounting Study of the Mind Health Science and Psychology **English-Literary Studies** Interdisciplinary Studies **Politics** Interdisciplinary Studies Accounting and Psychology Interdisciplinary Studies Psychology **Politics** Health Science Art-Studio Psychology Health Science History **Economics and Business** Spanish Health Science Biochemistry & Molecular Biology Chemistry Chemistry English-Literary Studies and Theatre Arts Interdisciplinary Studies Psychology Biochemistry & Molecular Biology English-Literary Studies and Politics Biology Computer Science Psychology **English-Creative Writing** Health Science **English-Film Studies Environmental Studies** Biology Health Science Psychology Biology Biology **Economics and Business** Biology **Politics**

Jacob Thomas Carpentier League City, TX Jack Adam Carroll Little Rock, AR Pine Bluff, AR Kya Dionne Carroll † Alexis Monet Carter Conway, AR Mattisyn Jade Chambers Conway, AR David Dylan Chappell Earle, AR Cordova, TN Oscar Chavez Jameson Padraig Clardy Springdale, AR Benjamin Lyle Cogbill Little Rock, AR Oklahoma City, OK Abigail Lynn Collier Jordan Marie Collins † ❖ Little Rock, AR **Emily Connery** Little Rock, AR Carsen Michelle Cotter † Mountain Home, AR Austin Glen Cox Sheridan, AR Elysia Mckenna Crawford † Alma, AR Jayson Connor Crumpler † Cabot, AR Timothy Jude Curran † Mountain View, AR Nicolas Dane Curtis Antioch, TN Cierra Daniels † ⋄ Fort Worth, TX Abriel E'Von Davis Jacksonville, AR Maxwell Rubin Dawson Fayetteville, AR Cameron Alan Deal El Dorado, AR Grace Anne Dean Conway, AR Graham Allen DeForest Ruston, LA Karla Regina Delgadillo Galaviz Juarez, Mexico Riya Parag Deshpande Conway, AR Kathryn Zae Diekman Little Rock, AR Landry Kathryn Dosher † § DeQueen, AR Kevin Michael Douglas Greenwood, AR Christiana Racquel Durkee-Fairley Flower Mound, TX Martin Davis Dver † Alma, AR Annathea Jane Elliott ‡ * ∫ ❖ Albuquerque, NM Cade Daniel England† Conway, AR Taryn Brach England Gentry, AR Ethan E. Epperson North Little Rock, AR North Little Rock, AR **Grace Epperson** Isabella Derrington Eurgil Daphne, AL Thomas Clay Farrar Little Rock, AR Meredith Olivia Feltenstein † Saint Louis, MO Hannah Katherine Fewell Mendenhall, MS Alaina Katherine Filley Spring, TX Morgan Ann Ford Fresno, CA Little Rock, AR Reece Clayton Forrest † * Taylor Y. Forrest ⋄ Bossier City, LA Robert Murphy Williamson Fowler English, IN Steven Tyler Francis † § Bryant, AR Bergen O. Franklin § Fayetteville, AR

English-Creative Writing

English-Creative Writing

Environmental Studies

Spanish and Art-Studio

Health Science

Health Science

Pass Christian, MS

Siloam Springs, AR

Little Rock, AR

Mansfield, TX

Collierville, TN

Plano, TX

Chemistry Amy Lianne Fuhler Conway, AR Study of the Mind and Spanish Gabrielle Audris Lefear ‡ * ∫ ❖ Little Rock, AR **English-Literary Studies** Paige Lynn Fuhrman † § Benton, AR Biochemistry & Molecular Biology Nathan Michael Lemke ‡ Plano, TX and Health Science Biology and Economics and Business Meghan Piper Fuller-Freeman Hot Springs, AR Biochemistry & Molecular Biology Bhavya Lenin * Conway, AR Psychology and Health Science Adison Christine Fulmer Greenbrier, AR Psychology Reagan Jeffress Little Little Rock, AR Christian Lee Gadison † * Bedford, TX Health Science Batesville, AR **Economics and Business** Canon Garrison Luter † * Psychology Liam Errol Gilbert Little Rock, AR Oakville, Canada Economics and Business and French Zachary Ryan Marriott ‡ * Psychology Abigail Louise Glose Sugar Land, TX **Economics and Business** Rogers, AR Janette Martinez **English-Creative Writing** Brianna Britney Graggs † § Jacksonville, AR Computer Science Tyrone Demond Mason Conway, AR Art-Studio Kobi Milan Greer Alexander, AR Somi Mathews † * ❖ Allen, TX Health Science **Economics and Business** Marshall Gregg Lakeway, TX **Economics and Business** Alicia Millie McCloria † * Muldrow, OK Biochemistry & Molecular Biology Russellville, AR William Haltom Griffin **Economics and Business** Wyeth Bishop McKean Bella Vista, AR Ian Michael Guthrie † Austin, TX Accounting Psychology Colton Cade McMullin Hot Springs, AR Seth Andrew Hakanson Rhome, TX Accounting **Economics and Business** Riley Andrew McMurren Terrell, TX Physics Emily S. Hale Maumelle, AR Accounting James Wyatt Medin † Dallas, TX Biology Zoey Undrea Hildreth Benton, AR **English-Film Studies** Ralston Davis Miller Springdale, AR Psychology Julia Elizabeth Hooper † * Searcy, AR Sociology/Anthropology emph. Sociology Audrey Estelle Mitchell ‡ McKinney, TX **Economics and Business** Farrah Dawn Hopkins † Vilonia, AR and Spanish Health Science Grace Elizabeth House † Greenbrier, AR **Politics** Micah David Moore Longview, TX **Economics and Business Andrew Thomas Huss** Rockwall, TX Mathematics and Computer Science Noah Vincent Morris † Maumelle, AR Music Isabella Michele Ifrah Little Rock, AR Health Science Areej Mukhtar Conway, AR Philosophy and English-Literary Studies Logan Wade Ingram Dyer, AR **Politics** Paul Jakson Needham † * Alma, AR **English-Creative Writing** Elliot David Toburen Jackson § Little Rock, AR Annabelle Nichole Neilson Health Science Hot Springs Village, AR Haley McKenzie Jackson Fort Worth, TX Health Science and Economics and Business Sociology/Anthropology emph. Anthropology Kaylee Jo Jacobs Bentonville, AR Health Science Little Rock, AR Jack Joseph Nolen † Politics and English-Creative Writing Colin Sullivan Jenkins (Austin, TX Interdisciplinary Studies Josephine Claire Nunn ⊗ Houston, TX Sociology/Anthropology emph. Sociology Isaac Sebastian Jimenez † Clarksville, AR **English-Film Studies** Shane Patrick O'Brien Memphis, TN Health Science Kaiah Jane Johnson Fort Smith, AR **Economics and Business** Teddy Edward Olander Naperville, IL **Economics and Business** Tyler Wynn Jones Millington, TN Interdisciplinary Studies Sophie Jemima O'Reilly § Tulsa, OK and English-Film Studies **English-Creative Writing** Andrea Ortega Hot Springs, AR Computer Science Matthew Wayne Kalahiki † Malvern, AR Psychology Angel David Ortiz Rogers, AR and Economics and Business Mountain Home, AR Interdisciplinary Studies **Hudson Michael Pace** Psychology and Health Science Memphis, TN Anna Aline Kannady † Health Science Madison R. Pardeck Branson, MO Sociology/Anthropology emph. Anthropology Matthew Jay Karlovitch Metuchen, NJ Biochemistry & Molecular Biology **Jackson Chad Parks** Lufkin, TX Classics Samuel Fontaine Keenan Fort Worth, TX Psychology Kendyl Bene Patton Monroe, LA Health Science Niall B. Kelley † Walpole, MA **Economics and Business** Loren Ashley Payne Jonesboro, AR Accounting Danny Lee Kern Van Alstyne, TX Health Science Omar Alejandro Pelayo Conway, AR Computer Science Isaac Insee Khounborine Springdale, AR **English-Creative Writing** Grace Kendall Peterson † * Hot Springs, AR Accounting Kyle Luis Kirk † Austin, TX Health Sciences Brandon Alan Pettigrew Hot Springs, AR James Dorough Kleck Colleyville, TX Biology **Politics** Houston Lee Phillips (Eagle, ID Biochemistry & Molecular Biology Kouadio Joharo Kondo Little Rock, AR Psychology Elijah Temple Pierce Little Rock, AR **Economics** Kelsey Elisabeth Korb † Owasso, OK **English-Creative Writing** Sam Michael Pierce Owasso, OK Little Rock, AR Health Science **Emily Kristine Kreps** Psychology Emma Kate Piercy Little Rock, AR Chemical Physics Maximus Hawthorne LaMendola Coppell, TX **English-Creative Writing** Luke Warren Pitts Alma, AR Computer Science Olivia Grace Tucker Larson * ❖ Conway, AR Sociology/Anthropology emph. Sociology Savion Ashanti Platt † Little Rock, AR Biology Ronni L. Laslo † 🖟 💠 Newark, AR Philosophy and Study of the Mind Talin Reed Polka Windsor, CO Study of the Mind Aubrey Clare Lee ⋄ Austin, AR Health Science Camryn Elizabeth Presley † § Fort Smith, AR Psychology Bauer Adams Lee § Little Rock, AR

MAJOR

GRADUATE

HOMETOWN

GRADUATE

HOMETOWN

MAJOR

GRADUATE GRADUATE HOMETOWN MAJOR HOMETOWN MAJOR

Environmental Studies and Biology Computer Science Biochemistry & Molecular Biology Psychology Biochemistry & Molecular Biology History Psychology Health Science Chemistry **English-Creative Writing Economics and Business** History and Politics Biology **Politics** French and History Health Science **Economics and Business** History Psychology French Religious Studies and Interdisciplinary Studies Biochemistry & Molecular Biology Psychology Philosophy **English-Literary Studies** Interdisciplinary Studies Biochemistry & Molecular Biology Physics Health Science Biology **English-Creative Writing Economics and Business** History Psychology **Environmental Studies** Health Science Theatre Arts **Politics** Psychology Health Science **English-Film Studies** Sociology/Anthropology emph. Sociology **Politics English-Film Studies** Biochemistry & Molecular Biology History

Alexander James Price ‡ Jonathon Andrew Qualls Spencer Nicholas Quon † Adriana Rabell Lopez Kendal Ann Rainey Grant Michael Reilmann John T. Richards Logan Riley Riojas Isabel Laney Ritter † Sable Alysse Robinson § Carl Adrian Rogers III Corissa Taylor Ross ‡ ∫ Sophia Jane Curtis Rubarts **Edward Hunter Russell** Lily Mae Ryall ‡ * § Jonathan Percell Ryan Swati Sajan **Matthew Connor Samples** Katherine Lynn Scalzo † Emma Claire Schroeder † * § Lauren Nicole Seckington †

Thanaphat Seeboonruang † * Claire Marie Segura † ∫ ◇ Tristan Skyler Sehika Ellery Ann Seymour † ≈ Mary Frances Shannon † * ❖ Robert Patterson Shannon II † Dillon Parker Simmons † Mackenzie Benita Sinclair Allana Christine Sisco Drew Carl Skelton § Braven Storm Skyrme Cornelius U. Smith † Mackenzie Dawn Smith Maeve Ellen Smith Haylee Songer Griffin L. Squires Kerterra E. Starr Avery Elizabeth Stephens † Dominic Liang-Xian Stevens Sophia Gwendolyn Stolkey * Laura Grace Summerlin Alexandra Leigh Sumrall

Seth Davis Taylor

William Michael Thames

Joshua Edgar Thomeczek † § ❖

Austin, TX Sociology/Anthropology emph. Anthropology Clarksville, AR Sociology/Anthropology emph. Sociology Olive Branch, MS Little Rock, AR Pottsboro, TX Wentzville, MO Beebe, AR Interdisciplinary Studies Roanoke, TX Hot Springs, AR **Environmental Studies** North Little Rock, AR Hazen, AR Computer Science Little Rock, AR Dallas, TX Jersey Village, TX Biology and Neuroscience Little Rock, AR Biochemistry & Molecular Biology Flower Mound, TX Coppell, TX Atlanta, TX

Stacy Alondra Torres † Vivian Nina Waldron † Lance Matthew-Dean Warner Ashley Ann Warrick Zoey Dannielle Corbin Weeks Lauren Elizabeth Whitehead Caden Blake Wilcox Audrey Renee Williams § Marcia Elizabeth Williams † ∫ ❖ Trevion Jamaal Williams Vada Jacqueline Wood § Sarah Elizabeth Wright Elizabeth M. Yang § Alex Mason Zitterman ‡ Yousef Ashraf Zonfuly

Chemistry

Psychology

Accounting

Psychology

Psychology

Biology

Health Science

Music

Little Rock, AR Conway, AR Sulphur Rock, AR Dallas, TX Fort Smith, AR Little Rock, AR Cookeville, TN Russellville, AR Vilonia, AR Forrest City, AR Manhattan, KS Benton, AR Little Rock, AR Russellville, AR Fort Smith, AR

Hot Springs, AR

Magnolia, AR

Beebe, AR

Austin, TX

Alexander, AR

St. Charles, IL

Little Rock, AR

Little Rock, AR

Brentwood, TN

Huntsville, AR

Jacksonville, AR

Rogers, AR

Rogers, AR

Beebe, AR

Alexander, AR

West Helena, AR

Lodge Grass, MT

lackson, MS

Decatur, AR

Benton, AR

Fort Smith, AR

Saint Louis, MO

Fredericksburg, TX

North Little Rock, AR

Port Orchard, WA Pocahontas, AR

Hoover, AL

Bentonville, AR

THE FOLLOWING COMMEMORATIVE GIFTS HAVE BEEN MADE TO HENDRIX COLLEGE IN HONOR OF THE GRADUATES

Keeley Lenore Ausburn

by Julie Janos '94

Jad Al Awar

by Christy Coker

Megan Dae Alexander

by Shelly and William Alexander

Ethan August Armour

by David and Kimberly Armour

Jacob Joaquin Avila

by Christy Coker

Drake Allen Bacchus

by Michelle and Clint Bacchus

Zach Bernheimer

by Richard and Anne Bernheimer

Olivia Michelle Bice

by John Bice and Michelle Sanders

Lily Katherine Vande Black by Amy and Joseph Black

Kennedy Ann Bobbitt

by Ann and Biff Averitt '66

Samantha Bailey Broussard

by Jenn McKenzie '94, Pamela Owen '82

Eleanor James Burks

by James Burks

Grace Capooth

by William and Laura Capooth

Jameson Padraig Clardy

by Renee and Blake Clardy '88

Benjamin Lyle Cogbill

by Clark '93 and Kay Cogbill '93

Carsen Michelle Cotter

by Curt and Michelle Cotter

Austin Glen Cox

by Ann Muse '83

Nicolas Dane Curtis

by Jim Thomeczek and JoAnne Levy

Cierra Daniels

by Keith and Evonia Daniels, Christy Coker

Abriel E'Von Davis

by Ann Muse '83

Maxwell Rubin Dawson

by Dave and Alice Dawson

Landry K. Dosher

by Dee Dosher, Ann Muse '83, Christy Coker

Cade Daniel England

by Shelley England

Ethan E. Epperson

by Mark Epperson, Becky Epperson, Christy Coker

Grace Epperson

by Mark Epperson, Becky Epperson

Taylor Y. Forrest

by Joyce Feagin and Gerald Forrest

Amy Lianne Fuhler

by Tony and Traci Fuhrman

Paige Lynn Fuhrman

by Traci and Tony Fuhrman

Abigail Louise Glose

by Laura and Matthew Glose

Kyler D. Greenlee

by Kimberlee and Kelly Greenlee

Marshall Gregg

by Christy Coker

, ,

Ian Michael Guthrie

by Brian and Melissa Guthrie

Seth Andrew Hakanson

by Darla and Chip Hakanson by Jenn M

Isabella Michele Ifrah

by Dina and Patrick Ifrah

Tyler Wynn Jones

by Terry Jones

Matthew Wayne Kalahiki

by Doris Jones

Matthew Jay Karlovitch

by Melissa and Glen Karlovitch

Danny Lee Kern III

by Danny and Donna Kern

Kelsey Elisabeth Korb

by Jenn McKenzie '94

Olivia Grace Tucker Larson

by Tammy Tucker '85 and Liz Larson '86, Jim Thomeczek and JoAnne Levy

Ronni L. Laslo

by Christy Coker

Bauer Adams Lee

by Simon Lee

Nathan M. Lemke

by Dana and Mike Lemke, Christy

Canon Garrison Luter

by Dennis and Monica Luter, Jim Thomeczek and JoAnne Levy

Alicia Millie McCloria

by Christy Coker

James Wyatt Medin

by Paul and Jasmin Medin

Areej Mukhtar

by Christy Coker

Jack Joseph Nolen

by Kathy Smith '69, Christopher and Shana Nolen, Julie Janos '94

Josephine Claire Nunn

by Ancel Nunn and Kelley Slack

Angel David Ortiz

by Julie Janos '94

Kendyl Bene Patton

by Jenn McKenzie '94

Elijah Temple Pierce

by Tiffany and Dwayne Pierce

Camryn Elizabeth Presley

by Darryl and Beth Presley

Logan Riley Riojas

by Jimmy and Maria Riojas

Corissa Taylor Ross

by Matty '96 and Ashley Ross '96, Jenn McKenzie '94

Sophia Jane Curtis Rubarts

by Cary-Elisa and Bobby Rubarts, Christy Coker Lily Mae Ryall

by Jenn McKenzie '94

Claire Marie Segura

by Sam and Kathy Segura

Tristan Skyler Sehika

by John and Lisa Sehika '94

Dillon Parker Simmons

by Patricia Matthews

Mackenzie Benita Sinclair

by Jenn McKenzie '94

Drew Carl Skelton

by Angela Tubb-Skelton and David Skelton

Haylee Songer

by Terri Songer

Avery Elizabeth Stephens

by Gilbert Hine, Genna and Todd Stephens, Joyce Stephens

Griffin L. Squires

by Ann Muse '83

Josh Edgar Thomeczek

by Jim Thomeczek and JoAnne Levy

Trevion Jamaal Williams

by Christy Coker, Julie Janos '94

Miller Center Service Scholars by Ellen Alston '82

Murphy Scholars in Literature and

Language, cohort of 2024 by Hope Coulter

United Methodist Youth Fellowship Leadership Scholars

by Ellen Alston '82



ABOUT PRESIDENT PETERSEN

The Commencement for the Hendrix College Class of 2024 is the first commencement ceremony under Dr. Karen K. Petersen, the 13th President of Hendrix College. President Petersen is the second woman to lead Hendrix as President, following Dr. Ann H. Die Hasselmo, who served from 1992 to 2001.

A native of northwest Arkansas, Petersen joined the Hendrix community from the University of Tulsa in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where she was a professor of political science and Dean of the Henry Kendall College of Arts and Sciences. She served 16 years at her undergraduate alma mater, Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, where she was a faculty member and Dean of the College of Liberal Arts.

Petersen earned her master's degree and Ph.D. in political science from Vanderbilt University. She and her husband, Joey Keasler, a northeast Arkansas native, are parents of two children, including a student-athlete at a residential liberal arts college.

