



School of Education
2025 Distinguished
**Alumni
Awards**

April 9, 2025



Welcome!

The School of Education has one of the largest alumni networks at the University of Pittsburgh, with more than **32,000 alumni in nearly 90 countries** around the world.

Together, we support the well-being of students, families, and communities through our collective work across teaching, learning, health, and human development.

Stay engaged with the school:

- Join Pitt Commons to network with your peers and support current students at commons.pitt.edu.
- Update your contact information on the alumni section of the Pitt Education website so we can stay in touch.
- Support the school by making a philanthropic gift.

Contact Michael Haas, director of development and alumni affairs, at mbh26@pitt.edu or 412-648-1789.

Order of Events

5:30–6:30 p.m. Reception

Buffet dinner and refreshments

6:30–8:30 p.m. Awards Ceremony

Opening Remarks

Robert Scherrer, EdD

President, School of Education Alumni Society

Presentation of Awards

Eboni M. Zamani-Gallaher, PhD

Renée and Richard Goldman Dean,
School of Education

Robert Scherrer, EdD

Scholarship Recognition

Eboni M. Zamani-Gallaher

8:30 p.m. Event Concludes

Featured Presenters



Eboni M. Zamani-Gallaher, PhD

Renée and Richard Goldman Dean and Professor, Pitt School of Education

An accomplished scholar, Eboni M. Zamani-Gallaher's work focuses on equitable participation in higher education; transfer, access, and retention policies; minoritized student populations in marginalized institutional contexts; and racial equity and campus climate in postsecondary education pathways. Prior to her tenure as dean, Zamani-Gallaher served as the associate dean for equity, justice, and strategic partnerships in the School of Education. As a researcher, Zamani-Gallaher has amassed over \$11 million in external funding on projects aimed at improving the field of higher education. In addition to her work at Pitt, Zamani-Gallaher is a leader in a variety of professional organizations. She is executive director of the Council for the Study of Community Colleges and president of the Association for the Study of Higher Education. Zamani-Gallaher holds a PhD in educational organization and leadership from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, an MS in general experimental psychology, and BS in psychology from Western Illinois University.



Robert Scherrer, EdD

Board President, Pitt School of Education Alumni Society

Robert Scherrer (EdD '09) is president of the University of Pittsburgh School of Education Alumni Society. He is executive director of the Allegheny Intermediate Unit, a regional education services agency serving the greater Pittsburgh area. In this role, he has developed and implemented a new strategic plan and supported school entities throughout the region. Previously, he was superintendent of the North Allegheny School District and a principal at Pittsburgh Allderdice High School and the Pittsburgh Science and Technology Academy. Scherrer earned his Superintendent's Letter of Eligibility and EdD in administrative and policy studies from the University of Pittsburgh School of Education. He also holds a BS in business education, an MEd in business education, and a Principal's Certification from Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

Award Categories

The Distinguished Alumni Awards Ceremony is held annually to celebrate the accomplishments of the outstanding alumni and students of the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh. We are proud to recognize our school community with the following awards:

Distinguished Student Leadership Award

Outstanding Alumni EdD Dissertation Award

Outstanding Alumni PhD Dissertation Award

Departmental Distinguished Alumni Award: Educational Foundations, Organizations, and Policy

Departmental Distinguished Alumni Award: Health and Human Development

Departmental Distinguished Alumni Award: Teaching, Learning, and Leading

Distinguished Early Career Award

Distinguished Pre K-12 Educator Award

Distinguished Alumni Award

Distinguished Student Leadership Award



Rachael Stowe

MEd in Education Policy, Pitt School of Education

Rachael Stowe is a second-year master's student in the Education Policy program. She received a B.S. in Applied Developmental Psychology with a minor in Social Work from the University of Pittsburgh in 2022 and was recognized as the recipient of the 2021 School of Education Dean's Distinguished Undergraduate Award. Stowe previously worked as an elementary special education teacher in Atlanta Public Schools. Stowe currently serves as a graduate assistant on the Partnership for Student Success, a national project housed at the Everyone Graduates Center at Johns Hopkins University. As a highly engaged student at the School of Education, Stowe is president of the Council of Graduate Students in Education (CGSE) and is a thought partner for the school's Rural and Community-Based Education Initiative.

Outstanding Alumni EdD Dissertation Award



Allyce Pinchback-Johnson (BS/CERT '09, EdD '24)

Founder & CEO, Pinchback Consulting LLC

Allyce Pinchback-Johnson is Founder and CEO of Pinchback Consulting LLC, which was established in 2017 to help organizations improve through capacity building, strategic planning, and community engagement. With over 15 years of experience in education and nonprofit sectors, she previously served as director of professional development for Pittsburgh Public Schools, chief program officer for Gwen's Girls, and program officer for the World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh. Pinchback-Johnson holds a bachelor's degree in psychology and Japanese from the University of Pittsburgh, a Master of Public Management from Carnegie Mellon University, and a Doctor of Education in Urban Education from Pitt. She is a founding member of Black Women for a Better Education and serves on numerous boards and committees that reflect her commitment to community service and educational improvement.

Outstanding Alumni PhD Dissertation Award



Meghan Orman (PhD '24)

Postdoctoral Associate, Cornell University

Meghan Orman is a postdoctoral associate at Cornell University, focusing on statewide initiatives to improve early childhood educators' health and well-being. Her research is centered on creating supportive environments through community-based, culturally responsive interventions. While at the University of Pittsburgh, she conducted research on young children's connections to nature in Iceland through a Fulbright-NSF Arctic Research award. Orman earned her PhD in applied developmental psychology from Pitt's School of Education, a master's in philosophy from the University of North Florida, and holds a Montessori infant/toddler credential. Her professional background includes 10 years of teaching philosophy as an adjunct instructor and five years as a toddler teacher. Additionally, Orman mentors undergraduate and graduate students with an emphasis on research that can bridge developmental psychology with real-world solutions.

Departmental Distinguished Alumni Awards

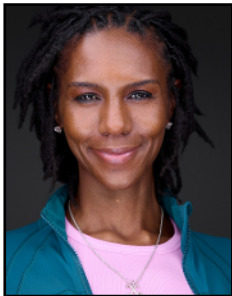


Educational Foundations, Organizations, and Policy

Larry Lunsford (PhD '83)

Vice President for Student Affairs Emeritus, Florida International University

Larry Lunsford is an educational leader who in 2019 retired as vice president for student affairs at Florida International University (FIU), where he had served in numerous leadership roles since 1989. He was subsequently named vice president emeritus by FIU in 2024. In addition, Lunsford had an appointment as an assistant professor in the Department of Higher Education Administration and was an adjunct instructor in the College of Arts and Sciences. He co-authored a required first-year class text, "The First Year: Making the Most of College." Lunsford's career has been marked by more than a dozen notable high-level educational affiliations, including serving on the board of directors of the publication "Student Affairs Today," as well as on boards of multiple interfraternity associations. In recognition of his service, he was presented with the prestigious Pillars of the Profession Award by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators.



Health and Human Development

Camille Smith (BS '06, MS '08, EdD '19)

Founder, Camille Clarke LLC

Camille Smith is a leader with more than 25 years of experience in exercise physiology. As founder of Camille Clarke LLC, she integrates personal training, health coaching, and massage therapy to help individuals achieve optimal health. Additionally, she is a program director in the Quality Improvement Department at UPMC Health Plan, leading the Medicare Faith and Wellness Program. Smith is also founder and executive director of Transforming the African American Woman (THAW), a nonprofit empowering Black women through holistic wellness and trauma recovery. Her educational background includes a BS in psychology, MS in exercise physiology, and EdD in health and physical activity from the University of Pittsburgh. She is currently completing her Master of Social Work, expected in summer 2025, to further integrate mental health support into her practice.



Teaching, Learning, and Leading

Jana Bonds (EdD '22)

Assistant Principal, West Manheim Elementary School

Jana Z. Bonds, assistant principal at West Manheim Elementary School in south-central Pennsylvania, has supported many students and educators during the past 17 years. Beginning her career as a technology and engineering educator, she became a driving force in advancing hands-on STEM learning and student leadership within her school system. In her leadership role, Bonds is committed to broadening access to high-quality STEM education. Recently she contributed to a partnership with the Cal Ripken Jr. Foundation to bring STEM Centers to her school district's elementary schools, ensuring all students have access to engaging, hands-on learning experiences. She received both the International Technology and Engineering Educators Association Emerging Leader Award and the National Technology Student Association Pennsylvania Middle School Advisor of the Year Award.

Distinguished Early Career Award



Anthony Sendro (MEd/ADCTG '23)

Teacher, West Jefferson Hills School District

Since 2019, Anthony Sendro has been a second-grade teacher at West Jefferson Hills School District. He has immersed himself in implementing innovative teaching practices and fostering a positive school culture. In addition to teaching, Sendro serves as the second-grade coordinator at the district, aligning grade-level goals with district initiatives. In addition, he is the school's technology mentor, where he helps educators integrate technology into their classrooms and supports student-level communication efforts such as the morning announcements. Sendro, who aspires to become a school principal, holds numerous certifications concerning student needs and school safety. He is also invested in promoting the district's alumni network. He earned his Master of Education with a K-12 Principal Certification from the University of Pittsburgh School of Education in 2023.

Distinguished PreK-12 Educator Award



Bille Pearce Rondinelli (EdD '99)

Educational Consultant | Fellow, Grable Foundation

For more than 40 years, Bille Pearce Rondinelli has served K-12 students in southwestern Pennsylvania. For nine years, she led the South Fayette School District as superintendent during a time of significant change at the district due to enrollment growth. The district saw transformational changes across facilities, including newly constructed buildings that complemented academic goals and instructional needs. Currently an educational consultant and a fellow with the Grable Foundation, Rondinelli has been nationally recognized through her work. She received an invitation to the White House National Educational and Technology summits and served on the advisory council of the national Digital Promise: League of Innovative Schools. Rondinelli earned her BA and MEd degrees from Westminster College and her EdD from the University of Pittsburgh School of Education.

Distinguished Alumni Award



Kelly Austin (PhD '11)

Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost,
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

Kelly Austin is senior vice president for academic affairs and provost at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach, Florida. In this role, he oversees academic and student success at one of the world's leading higher education institutions focused on aviation, aerospace, and research. Austin began his career at Embry-Riddle years ago as an academic advisor. Since then, he held a variety of higher education roles in Pennsylvania. Most recently, he worked as vice president and executive chancellor at Penn State, University Park. Before that, he was the associate vice president for administration in the Office of the Senior Vice President of Commonwealth Campuses. Earlier, he was chancellor at Penn State Schuylkill and vice president for finance and administration at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown. Austin earned his PhD from the University of Pittsburgh, and an MBA in Aviation (airline management) from Embry-Riddle.

Special Recognition



Silver Francis Oonyu (MEd '12)

Founder, Silver Memorial Inclusive Learning Center

Oonyu was one of two recipients of the 2023 Distinguished Alumni Award but was unable to attend that year's awards ceremony.

Silver Francis Oonyu, a native of Uganda, lost his sight as a young boy after contracting measles. While he lacked access to special education services growing up, he found refuge as a teenager at St. Francis Primary School for the Blind. His experience inspired him to pursue his dream of opening an inclusive school for children with disabilities in his native country. Oonyu earned a master's degree in special education and a graduate certificate in African studies from the University of Pittsburgh. After graduation, he returned home to found the Silver Memorial Inclusive Learning Center, or SMILE School. Serving about 200 children, the school provides an education that students are unlikely to find anywhere else in the region and includes instruction on how to use adaptive tools, including braille, mobility equipment, and assistive information technology.

Scholarships and Fellowships

Thanks to the generous support of our alumni and friends, our School of Education can provide financial support for future leaders in education.

Dr. Lillian M. Fehr Endowment

Dr. Margaret J. Wilson Endowed Student Resource Fund in the School of Education

Dr. Maxine G. Roberts Scholarship

Dr. Michael and H. Joan Radvansky Scholarship

Dr. Robert Robertson Outstanding Doctoral Student Award

Earl and Anna Broady Foundation Scholarship

Eartha L. Williams Endowed Fund

Edson Boyd Powell Scholarship for Educational Administration

Eli-Sar Graf Foundation Scholarship

Ernest B. Dorow Endowed Scholarship Fund

Ethel B. Feldman Scholarship

Ethel Henderson Luckhardt Scholarship

Eva K. Thomas Endowed Scholarship Fund for the School of Education

Harry C. Luebbe Jr. Endowed Scholarship Fund

Helen S. Faison Scholarship Fund

J. Orville Wood Scholarship

James E. Rohr Family Fellowship

Janet Dague Kraus Memorial Fund

Jean M. Slack Scholarship

John R. Bender Endowed Scholarship

June and William Mullins Endowment

Karl C. H. Oermann and Kenneth F. Metz Endowed Scholarship

Kathleen N. Holleran Endowed Fund for Student Resources

Laughlin Endowed Fund in the School of Education

Lesgold Family Endowed Scholarship

Lois Lyden Zord and The Honorable Joseph Zord, Jr. Endowed Scholarship in the School of Education

Margaret M. Greenawalt Memorial Scholarship

Mary O. Saltsman Scholarship Fund

Mima Bozzi Endowed Student Resource Fund

Neil Parham Endowed Resource Fund

Patricia Ann Allan Scholarship

Paul H. Masoner Scholarship

Peter C. and Rita Blasek Bennett Endowed Scholarship in the School of Education

Philmena Bianchi Adamson Endowed Fund for Student Resources

Regis J. Larkin Endowed Fund

Richard N. and Bernadette C. Jakicic Student Recognition Fund

Rita M. Bean Endowed Student Resource Fund

Samuel N. Francis and Richard Wynn Scholarship for Educational Administration

Sarah F. and Elizabeth Graf Fund

School of Education Centennial Student
Resource Fund

Wesley H. Carlson and Marian
Davis–Carlson Fund

Schurman Family Education Fund

William A. Yeager Fellowship

Sekey Sisters Fund

Wilma Nagy Ventmiller Endowed Fund

Sherry Berkowitz Memorial Award

Stephen M. Koziol Endowment for Student
Research

Sturdevant Family Endowed Scholarship
Fund for Early Childhood Education

Teresa Sirianni Amelio Student Resource
Fund

The Caroline Urban Alleman Endowed Fund

The Equity and Justice Spirit Award Fund

The Goldman Grit Award: A Fund for
Students Who Have Grit and Drive in
Education

The Karen and Ned VanderVen Professional
Development Fund

The Katherine George Eberly Endowed
Scholarship Fund

The Linck Memorial Scholarship Fund in
Education

The Natalie A. Kaplan and The Honorable
Lawrence W. Kaplan Student Resource Fund

The Walter Barnes Sr. & Stella G. Barnes
Scholarship Fund

Tomayko Foundation Innovation Fund

Tyrene Livingston Memorial Student
Resource Fund

Urban Educator Endowment

Walter A. McCullough Quasi Endowment

Warren Shepler Endowment Fund

Weimann Family Teaching Scholarship
Fund

Our Mission-Vision

The following statement is the mission-vision of the School of Education. It encapsulates what we do, what we believe, and who we continually seek to become as members of the school community.

“We ignite learning. We strive for well-being for all. We teach. We commit to student, family, and community success. We commit to educational equity. We advocate. We work for justice. We cultivate relationships. We forge engaged partnerships. We collaborate. We learn with and from communities. We innovate and agitate. We pursue and produce knowledge. We research. We disrupt and transform inequitable educational structures. We approach learning as intertwined with health, wellness, and human development. We address how national, global, social, and technological change impacts learning. We shape practice and policy. We teach with and for dignity. We think. We dream. We lead with integrity. We are the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh.”

