Freeman recognizes more than 700 graduates at 2024 diploma ceremonies

May 18, 2024



Dean Paulo Goes salutes graduating students at the second of the Freeman School's three Diploma Ceremonies, which each took place in Fogelman Arena at Devlin Fieldhouse on May 17. Photos courtesy of Millerfoto.

With more than 700 degree candidates set to participate in this year’s graduation festivities, the Freeman School did something it had never done before: Host three ceremonies.

On Friday, May 17, The Freeman School hosted two separate diploma ceremonies for undergraduate degree candidates and one for master's and PhD candidates.

“This was the ‘COVID class,’ the students whose high school graduations were cancelled due to the pandemic, so there was pent-up demand among students and

their families to experience a graduation ceremony with all the pomp and circumstance," said Goes. "By splitting the undergraduate ceremony into two — one for finance majors and one for all other majors — we were able to do away with tickets and open the ceremonies to whomever wished to attend."

That decision was greeted enthusiastically, with thousands of family members and friends filling Avron B. Fogelman Arena at Devlin Fieldhouse for the Freeman School's three graduation ceremonies.

The festivities kicked off at 8 a.m. with the undergraduate ceremony for finance majors followed by a reception in the Goldring/Woldenberg Business Complex's Marshall Family Commons. As soon as that ended, the second undergraduate ceremony — for management, marketing and legal studies in business majors — began at 11 a.m. with a reception following.

In addressing the class, Dean Goes reflected on the tumultuous time in which students are graduating, a period marked by war, economic uncertainty, climate change and technological disruption, before declaring that they, by virtue of their Freeman education, are well prepared to take on the challenges of the day.

"The Freeman experience— that one-of-a-kind combination of academics, experiential learning, professional development and extracurricular activities— provides you with the applicable skills you need to hit the ground running in your professional careers," Goes said. "At the same time, your Freeman education also emphasizes those uniquely human capabilities — critical thinking, communication, decision making, ethics, leadership — skills that enable you to think on your feet, adapt to new and unforeseen challenges, and manage transformative change within your organizations. Together with your unique life experiences, you have everything you need to take on this dynamic, fast-changing world."



Jillian Parish



Michael Davis

Jillian Parish (BSM ’24) received the BSM Scholastic Achievement Award, which recognizes the graduating Bachelor of Science in Management student with the highest cumulative grade point average. **Michael Davis (BSM ’24)** was honored with the Evelyn and William Burkenroad Award, which is chosen by the senior class on the basis of scholarship, integrity, amiability and contributions to the professional, social and academic quality of the business program. Davis was also inducted into the William Wallace Peery Society, the university's top academic honor for undergraduates.

Four undergraduates received the Tulane 34 Award, which is presented annually to 34 graduates from across the university in recognition of exceptional academic achievements, student leadership and community service. Receiving the Tulane 34 Award were **Camille Croft (BSM ’24)**, **Sion James (BSM ’24)**, **Yuqi “Jessie” Ji**

(BSM ’24) and **Grant Roquemore (BSM ’24)**.

The Dean’s Service Award, honoring students who have, in the opinion of the administrative staff and the dean, added dimension to the school through outstanding contributions of time and effort, was awarded to eight graduates: **Joshua Belew (BSM ’24)**, **Alexa Fuhrer (BSM ’24)**, **Brooklynn Hamilton (BSM ’24)**, **Sion James (BSM ’24)**, **Ngadi Kamara (BSM ’24)**, **Shalini Kishore (BSM ’24)**, **Jahnavi Movva (BSM ’24)** and **Liza Picini (BSM ’24)**.

The Wall Street Journal Award, which recognizes BSM students whose academic performance in the area of finance is considered exceptional, was presented to **Kobe Zagon (BSM ’24)**.

Ethan Kushnick (BSM ’24) was named a Senior Honors Scholar in recognition of his Honors Thesis on the failure of Silicon Valley Bank.

Later that afternoon, the Graduate Diploma Ceremony continued the festivities, with 146 candidates for Freeman School master’s and doctoral degrees participating.



Paymon Rezaii



Connor Comeaux

Paymon Rezaii (MD/MBA ’24) received the Marta and Peter Bordeaux Scholastic Achievement Award, which recognizes the graduating MBA student with the highest cumulative grade point average. **Connor Comeaux (MBA ’24)** received the Roger L. Cornelius Award, which recognizes the graduating MBA who embodies the highest standards of business scholarship and leadership.

Inderdeep Gakhal (MBA ’24) received the Allen R. Vorholt Memorial Award, which honors graduates of the Executive MBA program who demonstrate leadership, scholarship, the ability to balance priorities and a strong sense of civic obligation.

Two Freeman School graduate students received the Tulane 34 Award: **Jade Barnblatt (MBA ’24)** and **Kalsey Belle (MBA ’24)**.

The Dean’s Service Award for graduate programs went to **Olivia Warsing (BSM/MACCT ’24)**, **Sydney Trainor (MBA ’24)** and **Grant Laws (MME ’24)**.

The Freeman Leadership Award, established by the Graduate Business Council in 2019-20 to recognize students who exemplify engagement through leadership in student organizations and commitment to improving the business school experience for fellow students, was awarded to **Alyshah Banani (MFIN ’24)**, **Jade Barnblatt (MBA’24)** and **Kalsey Belle (MBA ’24)**.

The Tulane Association of Business Alumni Award, which recognizes graduates who rank in the top 10% of their classes and who display exceptional intellectual ability, leadership, self-motivation, and responsibility to peers, the school and the community, was awarded to **Jiahe Zhang (BSM/MACCT ’23)**, **Andrew Belnap (MD/MBA ’24)**, **Alyssa Fasano (MBA ’24)**, **Patrick Fine (MBA ’24)**, **Inderdeep**

Gakhal (MBA ’24), **Jaelyn Young (MANA ’24)**, **Theo Debackere (MFIN ’24)** and **Monica Patiño (MME ’24)**.

Dean Goes also recognized Assistant Dean for Graduate Programs **John Silbernagel (MBA ’88)**, who is retiring at the end of this academic year after 36 years with the business school.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, Goes said, “Today, you bid us farewell after spending time as our neighbor, friend, classmate and student. Everything you have done up to this moment — your academic training, your professional and extracurricular activities, your friendships and relationships, your hobbies and interests, the disappointments you’ve faced and the challenges you’ve overcome — all of these things have prepared you for this moment in time and this moment in your lives. You are ready for your journey. Congratulations, good luck and best wishes.”

To see more photos from the diploma ceremonies, visit the Freeman School's Flickr site.