



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
Office of Diversity and Inclusion

Celebration
of
Excellence

Program

Saturday, April 25, 2026

Social Time

Graduate Procession

Land Acknowledgement and Opening Remarks

Dr. Danyelle Gregory
*Interim Vice President
Office of Diversity & Inclusion*

University Welcome

President Kavalhuna Video

Presentation of Stoles

Asian Pacific Islander Desi American Stoles

Kente Stoles

International/Multicultural Graduate Stoles

Native American Stoles

Sarape Stoles

WMU Staff

Closing Remarks

Dr. Danyelle Gregory

*An **APIDA** (Asian Pacific Islander Desi American) **Stole** is presented to our domestic Asian American and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander students. The red stole with gold trim symbolizes the accomplishments of APIDA students and celebrate the diversity of cultures among APIDA students. Red and gold are symbolically positive colors in many APIDA cultures. We are presenting these to our graduates in remembrance of Dr. Ming Li, former dean and transformative leader of the College of Education and Human Development.

*A **Kente Stole** is presented to graduates who identify as African American/Black as a symbol of their pride in being of African descent. These stoles weave together the wisdom of Africa prior to the Middle Passage with the continued efforts to retain the identity and cultural knowledge of the Black experience during the diaspora.

*A **International/Multicultural Stole** is presented to our international students, as well as students who identify with more than one ethnicity or race, as a symbol of their successful journey in the pursuit of their education.

*A **Native American Stole** is presented to students who identify as Native American as a symbol of their heritage. The colors in the stole are representative of the elements of nature. The colors of the stole symbolize the students' connection to their heritage.

*A **Sarape Stole** is presented to students who identify as Latina/o/x/e as symbol of their cultural heritage. The sarape stole is an adaptation of the handwoven blankets worn in many Latin countries. Like the Kente, it is a symbol of the students' connection to their cultural heritage.

Land Acknowledgement

We would like to recognize that Western Michigan University is located on lands historically occupied by Ojibwe, Odawa, and Bodewadmi nations. Please take a moment to acknowledge and honor this ancestral land of the Three Fires Confederacy, the sacred lands of all indigenous peoples and their continued presence

Help support the Celebration of Excellence by making a donation at wmualumni.org/giving



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Thank you!



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