



UMB News

Nursing Grads Embody Grit, Determination, Resilience

May 31, 2022 | By [Laura Hager](#)

Graduates, families, and friends of the Class of 2022 were welcomed to the [University of Maryland School of Nursing's \(UMSON\)](#) Convocation ceremony May 19 at UMBC Chesapeake Employers Insurance Arena in Baltimore County. During the ceremony, the first in-person May Convocation that the school has held since 2019, 465 nursing degrees and certificates were conferred, including 199 Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degrees, 137 Doctor of Nursing Practice degrees, 115 master's degrees, and 14 certificates.



"Today is a celebration of grit, determination, and resilience. Of your willingness to get back up and keep fighting. Of coming together and relying on each other to survive. And of our continued commitment to keep giving to others," said student speaker **Marinela Baltazar Babich, DNP '22**.

During the ceremony, the 2022 Dean's Medal for Distinguished Service, which each year recognizes someone external to the school who has demonstrated an exceptional commitment to advancing UMSON and its mission, was presented to **William J. McLennan Sr.** From 2002 until his retirement in April, McLennan served as the executive director of Paul's Place, a human services outreach center in the Washington Village/Pigtown neighborhood of Southwest Baltimore. UMSON's partnership with Paul's Place spans more than 35 years, and UMSON created the original faculty-led Nurses Clinic, which serves as a student clinical site, at Paul's Place in 1986.

"The pandemic shined a light on how you, as front-line health care professionals, are a critical part of the equation to move individuals, families, and communities to a more stable and healthy life," McLennan said in his keynote address. "Don't forget to put your own oxygen mask on first! Find the time to take care of yourself because it will give you an even greater ability to take care of those around you — friends, colleagues, family, and of course, your patients."

Earlier in the day, **Christine Grady, PhD, RN, FAAN**, received the degree of Honorary Doctor of Public Service from the University of Maryland, Baltimore during the University's Commencement ceremony. This degree is conferred by the president of the University on behalf

Graduates of the University of Maryland School of Nursing recite the Nursing Oath.

Institutes of Health Clinical Center, she leads one of the nation's preeminent centers for bioethics scholarship and training.

of the chancellor of the University System of Maryland upon the approval of the system's Board of Regents. Grady was nominated for this honor by **Jane M. Kirschling, PhD, RN, FAAN**, the Bill and Joanne Conway Dean of the University of Maryland School of Nursing. Grady is a nurse-bioethicist and senior investigator; as chief of the Department of Bioethics at the National

The DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nursing Students was awarded to **Babatunde Oluwaseun Opeogun**, a graduate of the BSN program, and **Nicholas Joseph Peltz**, a graduate of the Clinical Nurse Leader master's option. DAISY awards are given each fall and spring to two graduating entry-into-practice students who demonstrate empathic care and service to patients and their families.

"Today, we launch you out into the world with a mission to do good, endowed with the necessary expertise," Kirschling said to the graduates in closing. "Make no mistake, you hold our future in your hands."

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