



Sixty-Fourth McMurran Convocation

**In Honor of the
2025 McMurran Scholars**

Shepherd University



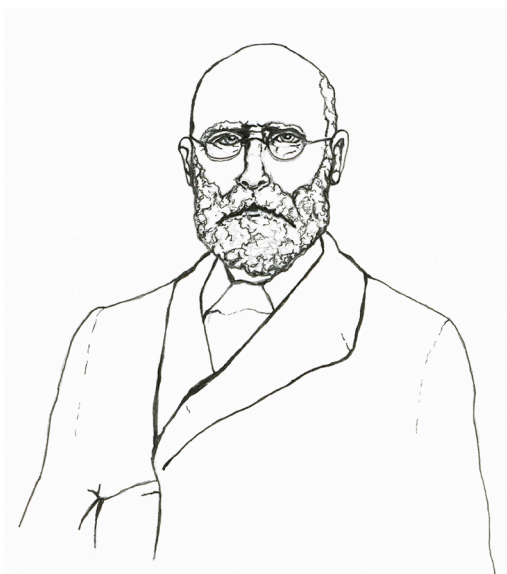
***Sixty-Fourth McMurrin Convocation
In Honor of the 2025
McMurrin Scholars***

Presented by

The Faculty Senate
Scholarship and Awards Committee

Mary J.C. Hendrix, Ph.D.
President

Joseph McMurran
First Principal of Shepherd College
1871-1882



The McMurran Scholar Award

The highest academic honor granted by Shepherd University, the McMurran Scholar Award, was conceived in 1961 by Professor Kenneth Riley, who served on the first Honors Committee, along with Librarian John Main and Dean of Students O. L. Harry. McMurran Scholars must complete a minimum of 90 semester hours, maintain a minimum 3.86 grade point average, complete two consecutive semesters of study at Shepherd, and be nominated by at least three faculty members. Nominees must then be approved by the entire Shepherd University faculty.

ACADEMIC HONORS CONVOCATION

Remarks

Dr. Mary J.C. Hendrix, President

The Star-Spangled Banner and Shepherd University Alma Mater

Brianna Schmuck, voice

Brass Ensemble: Trumpet - James Pickering, Zachary Brown,
Matthew Sliger, Nick Szabo; Trombone - Nick Krywcun, Juliet Wells; Tuba -
Savannah Hodges Trey Davis; Horn - Maggie White, Max Komori-Hertz

Dr. Scott Hippensteel, director

McMurran Address: The Last Lecture Series

Ms. Karen Green, Director of Field Education
and Associate Professor of Social Work

Presentation of the 2025 Joseph McMurran Scholars

Biology: Dr. Courtney Campany

Business: Dr. Ben Martz

Chemistry: Dr. Jacquelyn Cole

Communication and New Media: Dr. Jason McKahan

Computer and Information Sciences: Dr. Robert Monahan

Contemporary Art and Theater: David Modler

Criminal Justice: Dr. Albina Laskovtsov

Education: Dr. Tracy Nichols

English: Dr. Mark Cantrell

History: Dr. David Gordon

Music: Dr. Yu-Hsuan Liao

Nursing: Dr. Brenda Johnston

Political Science: Dr. Samuel Greene

Psychology: Dr. Larry Z. Daily

Recreation, Sport, and Exercise Science: Dr. Stacey Kendig

Sociology: Dr. Robert Anthony

*You are cordially invited to a reception following the ceremony on
the Butcher Center Plaza. In case of rain, the reception will be held
in the Suzanne Shipley Wellness Center.*

Thank you to the McMurran Scholars Association for sponsoring this year's reception.

Shepherd University Alma Mater

1.

Close beside Potomac waters
Of historic fame,
Stands our noble Alma Mater
Glorious her name.

2.

Nestled in a quiet hamlet
'Neath the azure blue
Sends she forth her sons and daughters
Loyal, loving, true.

3.

Fondly in our memory resting
Happy, gladsome days
Still to thee, dear Alma Mater
Offer we our praise.

Chorus

Lift the chorus, speed it onward
Loud her praises ring,
Hail to thee beloved Shepherd
Hail, all hail, we sing.

Don't forget your photos!

The Grad Team will be providing photographs of this special occasion.
You can pre-register at www.thegradteam.com/shepherd/ and will receive
a notification when the photographs are available.



www.thegradteam.com/shepherd/

The Joseph McMurren Scholars

Inducted 2025

Jillian Allen	Britney Huntley
Alexandra Alward	Lauren Kimball
Rebekah Banasik	Kelsey King
Abigail Bartlett	Samuel Lake
Baxter Bickey	Oliver Leonard
Delaney Bittner	Maria Leppo
Karli Brown	Susannah Lisk
Alecia Burgess	Charity Lundberg
Anna Cockerham	Carter Marcian
Liam Dardick	Charity Meyer
Amya Davis	Mason Miller
Clarence Decatur	Emily Moran
Hannah Fraley	Ethan Mullican
Alicia Graves	Autumn Osborne
Emma Harbour	Nayeli Plata-Candelario
Alexander Heath	Caitlyn Reinhardt
Shelby Henson	Joanna Schoonover
Shayna Hepner	Lindsay Smith
Mirian Hernandez	Dylan Walker
Kayleigh Hess	Gracie Walker
Sage Holzinger	Anna Walter
Talia Holzinger	Colton White
Cheyenne Hooker	Jillian Williams
	Laura Wilt

2025 McMurran Scholars

Biology

Presented by Courtney Campany, Ph.D.

Alecia Burgess is the daughter of John Alexander Burgess and Sylvia Santos Cruz. She came to Shepherd University having completed a rigorous homeschool curriculum. At Shepherd, Alecia is a biology major who wanted to have as “complete” a degree as possible, so she has minors in both chemistry and psychology. She is a passionate learner, curious about the world around her, and open to challenge. She is known for her thoughtful nature, asking questions, discussing paradigms, and often challenging the faculty when they provide ideas and answers. These qualities makes for an enhanced learning experience for all. Alecia can be quiet and yet has shown herself to have a dry sense of humor which can often catch people off guard. She is still planning the next steps in her career, but the faculty are confident that she will be successful.

• *Submitted by Robert Warburton, Ph.D.*

Liam Dardick, son of Chris and Emily Dardick, completed high school education in his Charles Town, West Virginia, home in 2022 while also taking classes at Shepherd University. He is an outstanding biology major in the Honors Program and is earning a minor in chemistry. Liam’s favorite part of being at Shepherd was participating in advanced biology electives. For his senior capstone project, Liam investigated the use of honeybees as a natural tool to detect harmful plant pathogens in the environment. Outside of the classroom, he is a member of the Appalachian Leadership and Education Foundation. Throughout his time at Shepherd, Liam has been a Dean’s List student and has been awarded several distinguished awards, including the Alumni, Elise Renn, and Paul Saab scholarships. After graduation, Liam is taking a gap year to gain more biological research experience before pursuing a Ph.D. in molecular biology.

• *Submitted by Conor W. Sipe, Ph.D.*

Shelby Henson, daughter of Tina and Jamey Henson, graduated *summa cum laude* from Martinsburg High School in Martinsburg, West Virginia, in 2022, where she was also awarded Outstanding Female Athlete of the Year. At Shepherd University, Shelby is a biology major with a chemistry minor. She has earned Dean’s List every year and holds multiple scholarships. Shelby is a member of the collegiate champion cheerleading squad at Shepherd. She is a member of the Beta Beta Beta National Biological Honors Society and volunteers for the Seeding Your Future Conference, which inspires young girls to pursue STEM careers. Shelby’s favorite things to do at Shepherd are cheer at Saturday football games and spend time getting to know people in the community. Shelby plans to attend graduate school and pursue a career in biomedical research. She is well on her way to that goal, having completed a prestigious National Institute of Health Pathways internship.

• *Submitted by Courtney Campany, Ph.D.*

Mason Miller, son of Diane and Steven Miller, graduated from East Hardy High School in Baker, West Virginia. Mason was Valedictorian of his high school class and All-State in football, wrestling, and track. Mason plays football for Shepherd University, serves as president of the Appalachian Leadership Education Foundation, and participates in Relay For Life. Last summer Mason had the outstanding opportunity to investigate the transcriptional control of breast cancer metastasis under the direction of Dr. Alexey Ivanov, as part of the competitive WV-INBRE summer research program. Mason is an enthusiastic and knowledgeable outdoorsman who raises chickens and ducks, hunts, fishes, and forages. He is devoted to his adorable Miniature Goldendoodle, Mya, and will spend the next summer training his new Treeing Walker Coonhound, Jack. After graduation from Shepherd, Mason plans to attend medical school to support his long-term career goal of practicing orthodontics.

• Submitted by Laura Robertson, Ph.D.

Business Administration

Presented by Ben Martz, Ph.D.

Susannah Lisk, daughter of Corinne and Roger Lisk of Charles Town, West Virginia, was homeschooled for high school. Susannah is a transfer from Blue Ridge Community and Technical College. At Shepherd University, she is majoring in business administration with a concentration in general business and a minor in graphic design. Susannah completed an internship with Professor Carol Goolsby and the Small Business Development Center, working with small business owners to create and design websites. She also completed an internship with the West Virginia University Experimental Rocketry Club for Graphic Design, designing graphics and decals for their 2024 rocket. After graduation, Susannah plans to continue doing freelance web design and to work with a graphic designer to gain more experience and skills in web design and graphic design.

• Submitted by Kathleen Reid, Ph.D.

Ethan Mullican is the son of Debra and Keith Mullican of Myersville, Maryland. Ethan graduated *summa cum laude* from Middletown High School in Middletown, Maryland. Before attending Shepherd University, Ethan obtained his Associate of Arts degree from Frederick Community College. Ethan is the recipient of the LOATS scholarship and the Stotler Scholarship. Ethan will graduate from Shepherd in December 2025 with a major in business administration with a concentration in general business and a minor in accounting. While at Shepherd, Ethan has developed the ability to learn in a variety of course formats. Once he graduates, Ethan plans to seek employment as an accountant to develop his skills and build his career in accounting.

• Submitted by Kathleen Reid, Ph.D.

Dylan Walker is the son of Cassandra and Kevin Walker of Falling Waters, West Virginia. Dylan graduated *cum laude* from Spring Mills High School in Martinsburg, West Virginia. Dylan is the recipient of the Promise Scholarship and the Carl and Susan Rauch Business Scholarship. Dylan will graduate from Shepherd University in December 2025 with a major in business administration with a concentration in general business and a minor in psychology. Shepherd has taught Dylan effective time management and how to think critically and clearly in the face of a challenge. Once he graduates, Dylan plans to start his career in the business field so that he can further his skills and experience. He looks forward to applying what he has learned at Shepherd in a real-world setting.

• Submitted by Kathleen Reid, Ph.D.

Colton White is the son of Ginger and Jason White of Shepherdstown, West Virginia. Colton graduated *magna cum laude* from Jefferson High School in Shenandoah Junction, West Virginia. Prior to Shepherd University, Colton attended Graceland University and Shenandoah University. Colton will graduate from Shepherd in December 2025 with a major in business administration with a concentration in financial planning and a minor in economics. Colton has maintained a 4.0 GPA throughout his college career. Shepherd has taught Colton to appreciate the joy of learning. His most significant project at Shepherd was in the financial planning capstone, where he had to develop a comprehensive financial plan. Once he graduates, Colton plans to sit for the CFP exam and seek employment as a financial planner.

• Submitted by Kathleen Reid, Ph.D.

Chemistry

Presented by Jacquelyn Cole, Ph.D.

Jillian Allen, of Middletown, Maryland, and daughter of Philip and Kathryn Allen, graduated from Middletown High School before starting her studies at Shepherd University. She is a traditional chemistry major with an applied physics minor and will be graduating this May. Jillian will be our first chemistry-Master's in Applied Teaching dual B.S./M.A.T. graduate and plans to become a high school chemistry teacher. During summer 2024, she was a SOARS (Shepherd Opportunities to Attract Research Students) student working on chemical education research and presented her research at the West Virginia Academy of Science meeting in April. One of her favorite things about Shepherd is studying with her friends in the "Cheminar" room.

• Submitted by Jacquelyn Cole, Ph.D.

Sage Holzinger is the daughter of Tania and Raphael Holzinger. She graduated from Musselman High School in Inwood, West Virginia, *summa cum laude* before starting her studies at Shepherd University. She is a traditional chemistry major with an applied physics minor and will be graduating May 2025. She is a member of Gamma Sigma Epsilon, the chemistry honors society. During summer 2024, she was a SOARS (Shepherd Opportunities to Attract Research Students) student and presented her research at the West Virginia Academy of Science. One of her favorite things about Shepherd is going to concerts and events on campus. She plans on pursuing a position in chemistry before continuing her education.

• Submitted by Jacquelyn Cole, Ph.D.

Talia Holzinger is the daughter of Tania and Raphael Holzinger. She graduated from Musselman High School in Inwood, West Virginia, *summa cum laude* before starting her studies at Shepherd University. She is a traditional chemistry major with an applied physics minor and will be graduating May 2025. She is a member of Gamma Sigma Epsilon, the chemistry honors society. During summer 2024, she was one of the students selected for the National Institutes of Health's Summer Internship Program where she worked on-site in Frederick, Maryland. One of her favorite things about Shepherd is going to concerts at the Frank Center. After graduation, she plans on pursuing a master's program in chemistry.

• Submitted by Jacquelyn Cole, Ph.D.

Samuel Lake, son of Douglas and Ann Lake, is a graduate of Hammond Hill Homeschool Academy. Sam is a chemistry major in the biochemistry concentration. He has been named to the Dean's List every semester of his Shepherd University career. Sam is a recipient of numerous awards and a member of numerous honors societies including Phi Kappa Phi. His prolific writing skills are well known and have proven invaluable, including NSF-funded research related to functional neuroscience with Dr. Conor Sipe and soon-to-be applied to research interests at West Virginia University supported by the NIH-funded WV-INBRE program. An accomplished violinist, whether playing for his church or as the concertmaster of the Shepherd University Community Orchestra, just ask him to play Vivaldi. His patience, positive attitude, and kindness to others will serve him well as he pursues a career in pediatric medicine.

• Submitted by Robert Warburton, Ph.D.

Communication and New Media

Presented by Jason McKahan, Ph.D.

Carter Marcian, from Bluemont, West Virginia, is the son of Rachel Bernadette Allen Marcian and John Norbert Marcian. A homeschooled student, he is graduating from Shepherd University *summa cum laude* with a major in communication and new media and a minor in English. Carter's academic strengths include being named to the Dean's List and producing thoughtful, thoroughly researched, and creative work. Carter impressed professors with how easily he applied scholarship and theory to his projects. Carter's favorite experiences at Shepherd include presenting on topics he's passionate about, especially children's television. He credits his professors for helping him believe in his creative vision. After graduation, Carter plans to pursue internships in film and television. His ultimate goal is to become a screenwriter for children's television.

• Submitted by Jason McKahan, Ph.D.

Computer and Information Sciences

Presented by Robert Monahan, Ph.D.

Oliver Leonard, son of Molly and Bruce Leonard, graduated from Kennebunk High School with a 3.9 GPA. Boasting a 3.91 GPA at Shepherd University, securing recognition on the Dean's List every year, and competing on the baseball team, Oliver studies applied math, data analytics, and business administration. Oliver received the National Science Foundation's S-STEM merit based scholarship and is president of the local chapter of its associated club. Oliver desires to offer a special thanks to his family, peers, teammates, coaches, and faculty for all their support and contribution to success during his time at Shepherd. Upon graduation, Oliver will begin an internship at Cross Insurance as an emerging risk manager trainee.

• Submitted by Robert Monahan, Ph.D.

Contemporary Art and Theater

Presented by David Modler, M.F.A.

Charity Lundberg, of Inwood, West Virginia, is the son of Karen and Jon Elliot. Charity is an ambitious young artist pursuing a B.F.A. with an emphasis on painting and minors in business administration and theater. Charity is highly active in the campus community. She is a member of Kappa Kappa Psi, Visual Arts Collective, Ram Band, Wind Ensemble, and Jazz Band. As a team member in numerous public mural projects with the Department of Contemporary Art, Communication, and Theater, Charity's contribution to Shepherdstown's beautification can be seen in the Gateway Mural on Alma Bea's Restaurant and a landscape mural soon to be installed at The Bridge Gallery. When she is not painting or playing the trombone or sousaphone, Charity pursues her passion for theater. She has participated in five theater productions and wrote a one-act titled "Yes, Dear." Charity strives to be a life-long learner and intends pursue a master's degree in art conservation, museum studies, or art therapy.

• *Submitted by Evan Boggess, M.F.A.*

Lindsay "Teddy" Smith, a graduate of Martinsburg High School, is the son of Jason and Carrie Smith of Martinsburg, West Virginia. Throughout his time at Shepherd University, Teddy has exhibited exemplary academic and technical skills, as well as a motivation to learn and grow. This pursuit of excellence has resulted in a steady and measurable improvement in his portfolio of creative work, which highlights his conceptualization, illustration and typography proficiencies. Teddy's outstanding critical thinking and verbal communication abilities have made him an invaluable contributor to classroom critique sessions and his opinions are frequently sought and valued by his peers. Teddy particularly enjoyed participating in the Department of Contemporary, Art, Communication, and Theater's 2022 Art Market, because he gained experience branding and marketing himself and successfully sold his artwork in a real-world context. He is a repeat winner of the Jeffrey Miller Memorial Scholarship for excellence in graphic design.

• *Submitted by Andy Dolan, M.F.A.*

Laura Wilt, the child of Sarah Elizabeth Wilt and Dr. Norman Lester Wilt III, is a bright, energetic artist that will earn a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in painting. They are an active member of the Visual Arts Collective (VAC) at Shepherd University, and have served as a studio assistant in the painting studio and the FASTenER Lab. Laura is known for creating detailed, thought provoking works that explore various mediums and technology and for exhibiting the work in regional shows as well as being selected for the juried Honors Exhibit. Their art has been published in West Virginia's YNST, New York's Chill Mag and Shepherd's San Merci. Laura is pleased to have been a part of the department's numerous hands-on learning activities of art markets, public mural painting projects, and traveling to D.C., New York, and Italy. Laura's long-term goal is to obtain her M.F.A. degree and teach and learn from generations of artists.

• *Submitted by Sonya Evanisko, M.F.A.*

Criminal Justice

Presented by Albina Laskovtsov, Ph.D.

Karli Brown, daughter of Samuel and Christina Brown, graduated *summa cum laude* from Sherando High School in Stephens City, Virginia. While at Shepherd University, she pursued a major in criminal justice and double minors in environmental studies and Spanish. She excelled in her studies and achieved the honor of being on the Dean's List for four years. After graduation, Karli wants to travel and visit every continent (except Antarctica) and live abroad. In the near future, Karli is motivated to pursue her master's and then her doctoral degree in criminal justice, so that she can continue learning and evolving her academic interests. While achieving educational success is important to Karli, she also plans to work for the FBI or open a private investigation firm.

• Submitted by Albina Laskovtsov, Ph.D.

Education

Presented by Tracy Nichols, Ph.D.

Abigail Bartlett, daughter of Roscoe and Heather Bartlett, graduated from Tuscarora High School. As an elementary education major at Shepherd University, she is now completing a year-long residency. Following the tradition of her mother, Abigail started her career teaching night school to her dolls. Her mother would ask, "Why are you awake?" Her reply, "Because they need to learn." In sixth grade, she began teaching children at church. Teaching is in her blood, as she has developed a teacher voice that serves through her love of children and literacy. She is a member of Kappa Delta Pi international education honor society and has been actively involved in the Pen Pal Program, providing an authentic writing experience that encourages fourth graders to excel in their studies and plan for a college degree. After graduation she wants to earn a master's degree in literacy intervention.

• Submitted by LeAnn Johnson, Ph.D.

Anna Cockerham, daughter of Matt and Denise Cockerham, grew up in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, and graduated *summa cum laude* from Washington High School. While at Shepherd University, Anna joined two honor societies, Kappa Delta Pi and Phi Kappa Phi. During her time in both groups, Anna has enjoyed serving the community. She also joined Delight Ministries and, through all her organization memberships, has met some of her closest friends at Shepherd. Anna believes one of the biggest lessons Shepherd has taught her is to try new things. Along with being a part of the Honors Program, Anna has also been named to the Dean's List each semester that she has been at Shepherd. Once Anna graduates, her goal is to acquire a teaching position in a first-grade classroom and to do lots of traveling. Most importantly, Anna's desire is to go wherever God leads her.

• Submitted by Belinda B. Mitchell, Ph.D.

Alicia “Ali” Glaves, daughter of Jonathan and Sara Glaves, graduated *summa cum laude* from Spring Mills High School, in Martinsburg, West Virginia. She is a dedicated elementary education major set to graduate in the fall of 2025 and is a member of Shepherd University’s Ram Band. Ali has been on the Dean’s List all four years at Shepherd and has been awarded multiple scholarships, including the Merle J. and Josephine Saville Schultz Scholarship and the Helene Alvarez Bazzrea Memorial Scholarship. Ali’s plans after graduation include becoming an elementary teacher in either Washington or Berkeley County, and to continue her education with a master’s degree at Shepherd. Her favorite thing to do at Shepherd is to study with her friends and classmates. Shepherd taught her to never give up, and that with hard work and perseverance, anything is possible.

• Submitted by Tracy Nichols, Ph.D.

Cheyenne Hooker, a native of Romney, West Virginia, is the daughter of Debra Edwards and Anthony Hooker. She came to Shepherd University as an elementary education major from Hampshire High School. Cheyenne has been routinely named to the Dean’s List each semester. She is a recipient of the Promise Scholarship while also studying abroad in Kenya. Hooker has been inducted into various academic honor societies: Delta Zeta, Kappa Delta Pi, Order of Omega, and Phi Beta Delta. She has held various volunteer and leadership positions across campus for these organizations. After graduation, Hooker plans to apply for a primary teaching position with future plans including a master’s degree in speech therapy. Cheyenne has enjoyed Shepherd’s tight-knit community and small-town atmosphere on campus. She proudly declares to have learned how to persevere, how to self-challenge, and how to be self-determining.

• Submitted by Dawne Burke, Ph.D.

Maria Leppo, daughter of Sam and Eleni Leppo, graduated from the Francis Scott Key High School in Westminster, Maryland. She is a major in the elementary education program at Shepherd University, where her academic achievements include the Dean’s List and membership in the Kappa Delta Pi education honor society. Maria has volunteered for a variety of worthy causes during her membership in Phi Kappa Phi, including Relay For Life, the Literacy Carnival, Shep-O-Treat, and many others. Maria says that one of the many things she has learned at Shepherd is the importance of collaboration with peers to bolster perseverance when mastering difficult projects, such as the rigorous residency program and the final assessment for certification, the edTPA. Maria plans to teach upper level elementary students in Maryland or Pennsylvania after graduation.

• Submitted by Tauna Cole, Ed.D.

Nayeli Plata-Candelario, the daughter of of Pilar Arnulfo Candelario, graduated *magna cum laude* from Musselman High School. She is pursuing her degree in elementary education. Nayeli has been named to the Dean’s List multiple times. Nayeli says that her favorite thing about Shepherd University is being able to be in the classroom. She loved teaching and connecting with her students. Nayeli attended Shepherd after transferring from Blue Ridge Community and Technical College and is grateful for her professors and advisor for being supportive and helping Nayeli to be confident in who she is. After graduation, Nayeli plans to teach at Berkeley County Schools and hopes to inspire her students.

• Submitted by JB Tuttle, Ph.D.

Caitlyn Reinhardt, daughter of Roger and Rosemarie Reinhardt, is a graduate of Woodgrove High School and resides in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. Caitlyn is an elementary education major who has been named to the Dean's List throughout her time at Shepherd University. Caitlyn is a member of the Delta Psi chapter of Kappa Delta Pi education honor society, serving as the chapter treasurer. Caitlyn's strong content knowledge across all disciplines has led to her induction into Shepherd's chapter of Phi Kappa Phi. During her time at Shepherd, Caitlyn has volunteered for numerous campus activities such as the School of Education's Literacy Carnival and EXCITED for Education. After graduation, Caitlyn plans to be an elementary educator and a source of inspiration to her students.

• *Submitted by Jason Allen, Ed.D*

English

Presented by Mark Cantrell, Ph.D.

Hannah Fraley graduated *summa cum laude* from Washington High School, and she is the daughter of Dean and Lisa Fraley. Hannah is an English major, with a concentration in literature and a minor in education. She is a member of Sigma Tau Delta, the English honor society, and Kappa Delta Pi, the education honor society. She has been on the Dean's List for all four years of her time at Shepherd, and was a recipient of the Robert W. McCormick Scholarship. She has also been involved with Relay For Life. In the summer of 2024, Hannah was an intern with The Journal, where she published eight articles. Hannah has repeatedly impressed the English department with her talents in both critical and creative writing. When asked about her favorite memories of Shepherd, she said it was sitting outside Knutti Hall to write. After graduation, Hannah plans to focus on her writing career and to pursue new experiences.

• *Submitted by James Pate, Ph.D.*

Britney Huntley, the daughter of Gregory and Kimberly Huntley, is a graduate of Berkeley Springs High School. At Shepherd University, Britney is majoring in secondary education with a specialization in English has been on the Dean's List every semester. A member of Sigma Tau Delta, the English honor society, Britney recently attended the organization's annual convention, where her essay on Emily Dickinson won an award for its sophisticated analysis. Britney is also an active member of Delight Ministries. She notes that her time with both groups ranks among her favorite experiences at Shepherd. She adds that Shepherd has taught her to "prioritize the things that are important to me." It is clear that excellence and kindness are important to Britney. After graduation, Britney plans to teach high school. She will no doubt have a profoundly positive and lasting impact on her students.

• *Submitted by Heidi Hanrahan, Ph.D.*

Autumn Osborne, daughter of Erika and Chuck Osborne, graduated *summa cum laude* from Clear Spring High School. Autumn is majoring in English and minoring in history at Shepherd University. She is an accomplished writer and scholar, mastering two rather different styles of writing and research. Both her essays and contributions to class discussions are well thought-out and extremely perceptive. She always asks the most interesting questions. Autumn is a member of Sigma Tau Delta, the English honor society, and has worked in the Academic Support Center as a peer tutor. She says that at Shepherd, she has “learned to trust myself as a writer and thinker. I have been pruned into a more creative version of myself, and now have a better understanding of my true capabilities.” In the future, Autumn plans to work for a non-profit organization whose mission she is passionate about. And, she wants to publish her novel.

• Submitted by James Pate, Ph.D.

History

Presented by David Gordon, Ph.D.

Baxter Bickey, is the son of Matt and Heidi Bickey. He graduated *summa cum laude* from Woodrow Willson High School in Beckley, West Virginia. Baxter majored in history at Shepherd, with minors in political science and global studies. He was named to the Dean's List for three years. As a student, Baxter enjoyed being part of the community. He participated in the Relay For Life events Shepherd hosts in conjunction with Jefferson County each year and enjoyed exploring the sights and sounds of Shepherdstown, especially the Rumsey Monument. He also met his girlfriend, River, when he came to Shepherd. After completing his undergraduate degree, Baxter plans to attend graduate school to study history or a history-related field.

• Submitted by Benjamin Bankhurst, Ph.D.

Joanna Schoonover is the daughter of Becky and Joe Schoonover of Preston, Maryland. Joanna graduated from Colonel Richardson High School in Federalsburg, Maryland. Joanna is a history major at Shepherd University, where she has distinguished herself by being named to the Dean's List for two years and being an outstanding member of the Shepherd University Honors Program. Joanna excels at research and writing and has taken advantage of the unique opportunities available at Shepherd, like spending two years working at the Robert C. Byrd Center for Congressional History and Education as an archivist intern and studying abroad in Europe with the Honors Program. Joanna said that her time as a student at Shepherd taught her how to take initiative in her education and seek career building opportunities whenever they are presented. After graduation, Joanna intends to pursue a master's degree in library and informational science with a concentration in archival studies.

• Submitted by Sally Brasher, Ph.D.

Music

Presented by Yu-Hsuan Liao, Ph.D.

Emma Harbour, the daughter of Mitchell and Jessica Harbour of Point Pleasant, West Virginia, graduated from Point Pleasant High School. Emma is a junior music education major at Shepherd University. As a proficient flute and piccolo player, she has performed in a variety of ensembles with students of all different backgrounds and experiences, giving her the experience of being able to come together with other students to make music. While at Shepherd, Emma has learned to go outside of her comfort zone, to appreciate every moment that she has with others, whether that is during ensembles or in classes, and to appreciate all opportunities that she is given. She has been named to the Dean's List the last three years and has been heavily involved in the National Association for Music Education and the Ram Band. After graduation, she plans to use her degree in music education to become a high school band director in the area.

• Submitted by Austin Showen, Ph.D.

Charity Meyer, daughter of B. Jean and Andrew Meyer, is from Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. Charity attended the Huyetts Mennonite School and is a senior music performance major at Shepherd University. Charity's senior harp recital, which showcased solo harp music from the Baroque Era to Contemporary, transformed hundreds of hours of dedicated practice into one hour of performance. She truly enjoys practicing music, learning the story it tells, and then sharing that story with others through performance, which she has demonstrated in her wide variety of musical performances ranging from Wind Ensemble, to Choir, to chamber groups, and as a soloist. She has been named to the Dean's List each semester since her first semester in fall 2021. Upon graduation, she plans to work for a publishing company in Virginia, developing elementary math curriculum, as well as pursue numerous musical activities in the area.

• Submitted by Stefan Swanson, B.A., B.M.E.

Nursing

Presented by Brenda Johnston, DNP, PMHNP-BC PMHCNS-BC

Amya Davis, daughter of Michael and Sidoney Davis, graduated *summa cum laude* from Hendrick Hudson High School in Montrose, New York. She is currently a nursing student at Shepherd University and holds a 4.0 GPA, earning Dean's List designation each semester for the past two years. In addition, Amya is a member of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee as well as the Shepherd Student Nurses Association. Remarkably, Amya is a collegiate volleyball player and was named captain of her team. With a passion for the sport, Amya volunteers to teach younger children how to play volleyball at free clinics and summer camps. Following graduation with her Bachelor of Science in Nursing, Amya plans to work at a New York hospital in the nursing specialty of emergency medicine and trauma care. Amya also plans to pursue graduate degrees in nursing and possibly become a nurse practitioner.

• Submitted by Lisa M. Zerull, Ph.D., RN-BC

Emily Moran, the daughter of Kelley Moran and Melissa Moran, graduated *magna cum laude* from Fairmont Senior High School. Emily is a full-time nursing student at the Shepherd University School of Nursing. Emily has been a member of the Shepherd University Honors Program and on the Dean's List. Emily has maintained a GPA of 3.89 in her classes. Emily chose nursing because she wanted to help people. She enjoys being at Shepherd because of the size of the university and her close connection with her peers and professors. Emily is also part of the Shepherd University Student Nurses Association (SUSNA). Emily plans to graduate from the nursing program and become a registered nurse in the operating room. She would then like to become a nurse practitioner. In her downtime, Emily enjoys playing the clarinet, dancing, and trail running.

• Submitted by Michelle Cooper, B.S.N.

Anna Walter, is the daughter of Jennifer and Christopher Walter. She graduated Summa Cum Laude from Washington High School in Charles Town, West Virginia, before coming to Shepherd. She majored in nursing and was an active member of Shepherd's student nurses association. She said that being at Shepherd taught her to appreciate that great things can come from small places and that you are not in this alone. A good community will help you to prevail. Anna's professors recognize her exceptional dedication, compassion, and skill, noting that she consistently went above and beyond in both academic and clinical settings. After graduating, Anna plans to gain experience working as a nurse before returning to the classroom to earn her my Nurse Practitioner degree.

• Submitted by Jennifer Barger, M.S.

Political Science

Presented by Samuel Greene, Ph.D.

Clarence Decatur, son of Rachel Shirley and Daniel Decatur, graduated *summa cum laude* from Washington High School. A Dean's List student and a member of Phi Kappa Phi, Clarence majored in political science with two minors in business administration and history while at Shepherd University. Over the past year, he has carried out an impressive research project that evaluated the link between immigration and political ideology in the European Union, and he claims that the most important thing he learned during his time at Shepherd was learning how to manage his time more effectively and be less of a procrastinator. Clarence is currently applying for positions in the political field. He also has plans to begin pursuing a master's degree in the future.

• Submitted by Stephanie A. Slocum-Schaffer, Ph.D.

Mirian Hernandez, daughter of Aida Anaya and Romeo Hernandez of Kearneysville, West Virginia, is a *summa cum laude* graduate of Jefferson High School. As a major in political science with a concentration in legal studies and a double minor in geography and sociology at Shepherd University, Mirian has distinguished herself through academic accomplishments and extracurricular activities. She made the Dean's List every semester, and has interned with the Bureau of Cyberspace and Digital Policy of the State Department. As she entered her senior year, Mirian was named a 2024 Benjamin Gilman International Scholar and a 2024 Charles Rangel Scholar. Mirian has also contributed to the campus community, especially through her involvement with student support services. Reflecting on her Shepherd experience, Mirian notes that one of her favorite things has been meeting interesting people in every class. After graduation, Mirian plans to enlist as a Peace Corps volunteer and pursue a master's degree in international affairs.

• Submitted by Max Guirguis, Ph.D.

Psychology

Presented by Larry Z. Daily, Ph.D.

Lauren Kimball, daughter of Gary Kimball and Danielle Kimball, is originally from Cape Girardeau, Missouri, and graduated from Hedgesville High School. Lauren majored in psychology with a minor in Spanish and secondary education. Her psychology capstone research project examined the relationship between the number of siblings a person has and their academic motivation and GPA. It also explored the role competition plays in future outcomes. Lauren achieved Dean's List status for three years while at Shepherd and is graduating *summa cum laude*. Lauren was a student-athlete on the cheerleading team and worked at the Shepherd University Wellness Center. Lauren's favorite thing to do at Shepherd is to be outside on campus in the spring. She said Shepherd taught her to make connections and get to know the people around her. After graduation, Lauren plans to pursue a master's degree in school counseling.

• Submitted by Heidi Dobish, Ph.D.

Recreation, Sport, and Exercise Science

Presented by Stacey Kendig, Ed.D.

Rebekah "Bekah" Banasik, daughter of Andrew and Jennifer Banasik, is from Round Hill, Virginia, and attended Woodgrove High School. While majoring in pealth Promotion and exercise science at Shepherd University, Bekah has earned Dean's List five semesters and the Director's Scholarship. For Bekah's extracurricular activities, she is a member of Sigma Sigma Sigma, Student Community Services Committee, and Order of Omega. Shepherd has taught Bekah to be less apprehensive, explore opportunities, and take more chances. Upon graduation, Bekah plans to pursue a master's degree in occupational therapy.

• Submitted by Jessica Graham, Ed.D.

Delaney Bittner, daughter of Jason and Revere Bittner, graduated *magna cum laude* from Red Lion Area Senior High School. While majoring in health promotion and exercise science at Shepherd University, Delaney has collected a host of athletic and academic accolades: Deans List, Honors Program student, 2022-2024 CSC Academic All-District, 2022 CSC Academic All American First-Team, 2024 CSC Academic All American Third-Team, 2024 PSAC Fall Top 10 Honoree, 2024 United Soccer Coaches First-Team All American, 2024 United Soccer Coaches All Atlantic Region First-Team, 2024 D2CCA All Atlantic Region First- Team, 2024 PSAC East Defender of the Year, and 2024 All PSAC East First Team. While Delaney will miss her Sunday visits to the Shepherdstown farmers' market, she will be continuing her education upon graduation in pursuit of becoming a physician's associate.

• Submitted by Jessica Graham, Ed.D.

Alexander "Alex" Heath, son of Steven and Katrina Heath, is from Bunker Hill, West Virginia, and was a *summa cum laude* graduate of Musselman High School. While attending Shepherd University and pursuing a degree in nutrition with a minor in health and wellness, Alex has been focused on his academic successes and named to the Dean's List a total of four semesters. During his time at Shepherd, Alex has also been active in and around the campus and community, securing the position of residence assistant for Shaw Hall the past two years and previously playing for the men's soccer team. He has recently completed his internship at the Tonic Herb Shop in Shepherdstown, where he thrives at applying his academic background in nutrition. Alex has a knack for being creative, persistent, and meticulous when it comes to completing tasks, which will serve him well in his future endeavors while pursuing a master's degree at West Virginia University in dietetics.

• Submitted by Stacey Kendig, Ed.D.

Shayna Hepner, daughter of Dain and Eva Taylor, is from Augusta, West Virginia, and graduated *summa cum laude* from Hampshire High School. Shayna is majoring in health promotion and exercise science with a concentration in Health Sciences. While attending Shepherd University, Shayna has earned the academic accomplishments of Dean's List and is a member of Phi Kappa Phi. Upon graduation, Shayna plans to explore job opportunities available in the career field, spend time with friends and family, and explore the option of going to physical therapy assistant (PTA) school. Ultimately, it is Shayna's hope to find a fulfilling career helping others in whatever ways that she can.

• Submitted by Jessica Graham, Ed.D.

Kayleigh Hess, daughter of Angel Smith, is from Martinsburg, West Virginia, and was a *summa cum laude* graduate of Spring Mills High School. While attending Shepherd University and pursuing a degree in health promotion and exercise science, Kayleigh was named to the Dean's List. During her time at Shepherd, Kayleigh notes that she discovered herself outside of the major and accomplished personal growth. Upon graduation, Kayleigh has been accepted into the Professional Master of Science in Athletic Training program at Marshall University and plans to pursue that accomplishment.

• Submitted by Jessica Graham, Ed.D.

Kelsey King, daughter of Daniel and Lisa King, is from Fallston, Maryland. While attending Shepherd University, Kelsey has been a member of the women's lacrosse team and has achieved the following accomplishments: All-PSAC East Second Team, 2024; Offensive MVP for Shepherd, 2024; and has tallied over 100 career points, 2025. Academically, Kelsey is just as stellar: Dean's List all four years; PSAC Scholar-Athlete Award, 2021-2022; CSC Academic All-District at-Large, 2023; CSC Academic All-District at-Large, 2024; PSAC Scholar-Athlete Award, 2021 and 2022; CSC All-Academic At Large, 2023 and 2024; inducted in Chi Alpha Sigma, 2024; and IWCLA Division II Academic Honor Roll, 2024. Upon graduation, she plans to begin the physical therapy doctorate program at the University of Maryland, Baltimore.

• Submitted by Jessica Graham, Ed.D.

Gracie Walker, daughter of Court and Sherry Walker, graduated from Boonsboro High School and has consistently demonstrated academic excellence, being named to the Dean's List twice. She is an exemplary student majoring in physical education. Gracie's dedication to her field is further highlighted by her recognition as SHAPE America's Major of the Year. She is an active member of Kappa Delta Pi, the education honor society, and Delight Ministries, showcasing her commitment to both academic and community engagement. In addition to her academic pursuits, Gracie works at the Scarborough Library and enjoys spending time at the Wellness Center. Her future plans include becoming an elementary physical education teacher in Maryland or Virginia, where she will undoubtedly continue to inspire and educate young people.

• Submitted by Julia Tracy, Ed.D.

Jillian "Jill" Williams is from New Cumberland, West Virginia, and the daughter of Jay and Deanna Williams. She is a graduate of Oak Glen High School. While attending Shepherd University and pursuing her degree in nutrition, Jill has also been an active member of our armed forces and we thank her for her service. Jill has been named to the Dean's List and a member of a national honors society. Jill has been an active member of the campus and community as she applied her academic background in nutrition to the successful completion of her internship with Aramark and working closely with Shepherd's students, faculty, and staff to engage in activities focused on enhancing nutritional value and lifelong learning. Upon graduation, she plans to pursue a doctoral degree in physical therapy while continuing her military career.

• Submitted by Stacey Kendig, Ed.D.

Sociology

Presented by Robert M. Anthony, Ph.D.

Alexandra Alward, daughter of Valerie and Troy Alward, attended Brunswick High School. While at Shepherd University, she was highly dedicated to studying sociology, focusing on culture and society with a minor in gender and women's studies. Alexandra produced an extensive capstone project where she studied criminal romanticization. During this process, she created a new concept of romanticizing, which supported her unique research topic. She participated in reinstituting the Sociology and Criminology Club on campus. Alexandra also worked as a sociology tutor for the Academic Support Center. She will graduate with an overall GPA of 3.97 and has maintained a straight-A average since transferring to Shepherd. Alexandra plans to go into research and academia, preferably at a small liberal arts university like Shepherd.

• Submitted by Robert M. Anthony, Ph.D.

View the Ceremony Recording and Past McMurran Scholars

A full list of past scholars and the recording of today's ceremony are available online at www.shepherd.edu/mcmurran.



The McMurran Convocation ‘Last Lecture’

The McMurran Convocation “Last Lecture” was established by the Shepherd University Senate in 2008 to honor an esteemed retiring or retired professor who has served the University and its students through the quality of his or her teaching, scholarship, and/or service to the campus and community. The “Last Lecture” is a unique opportunity to share with McMurran Scholars the wit and wisdom of the best in the higher education teaching profession, as well as an occasion to honor an extraordinary group of young scholars commencing their journey in the learned professions.

Ms. Karen Green Director of Field Education and Associate Professor of Social Work, retired McMurran Convocation “Last Lecturer”

Karen Kalista Green is the director of field education and an associate professor of social work at Shepherd University in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. She joined the Shepherd faculty in 2000, has taught across the curriculum from the first year experience to senior field courses, and has worked closely with community partners to create and maintain practicum placements for hundreds of students. Karen served as the University ombudsperson for thirteen years, providing support and alternatives to address interpersonal and institutional concerns of students, faculty, and staff. Karen is honored to have been recognized by Shepherd with awards for academic advising and civility, and to have served as chair and co-chair of the Department of Social Work and the Department of Social and Applied Behavioral Sciences.

Karen has worked in and provided training to a wide variety of settings and organizations, including schools, jails, hospitals, courts, public social service agencies, and private non-profits serving populations from infancy to late adulthood. As a licensed clinical social worker, her practice, professional presentations, and writing has centered on mental health and forensic social work, with a particular focus on trauma-informed care, social work in correctional settings, and groupwork practice.

Karen received her Bachelor of Science in Social Work from Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, where she was a first-generation college student and a Cornell Tradition Fellow, and her Master of Science in Social Work from Columbia University in New York City. She is a proud member of Alpha Gamma Delta, Mortar Board, Phi Kappa Phi, and Phi Alpha.

Karen will retire from full-time university teaching this year, and hopes to continue practicing social work through volunteer work, consultation, training, and clinical supervision. She looks forward to having more time with family, friends, and her many pets, and to abandoned hobbies and new adventures.

Joseph McMurran, Jr. Shepherd College Principal 1871-1882

Joseph McMurran, Jr., was the first principal of Shepherd College. Son of Joseph McMurran Sr., a man of wealth and influence who served in the Virginia State Legislature, Joseph Jr. was born on the family farm about two miles south of Shepherdstown, the fourth of nine children. After attending local schools, McMurran enrolled in Hampton-Sydney College at age 19, graduating in 1852 with a bachelor of arts degree.

Joseph McMurran began teaching in 1852, and for the next nine years held teaching positions in various private schools and academies in the South. He was teaching in Alabama when the Civil War broke out and returned to Virginia to enlist in a unit which later became known as the Stonewall Brigade. As a member of that unit, he participated in all of its campaigns and engagements. Wounded twice—once in the shoulder at Winchester and once in the lung at Gettysburg—McMurran was captured at Kernstown in 1862 and was confined to a Union prison for six months.

After the war, McMurran returned to the Shepherdstown area and began teaching once again. Utilizing the town hall, which had been built by Rezin Shepherd, a New Orleans merchant born near Shepherdstown, McMurran began plans to organize a college. The building had been converted to a courthouse from 1865 to 1871, but became available when the county seat of Jefferson County was moved back to Charles Town. McMurran was the college's principal from 1871 until 1882. A curriculum was established, faculty were employed, and the college began to function in 1871. Financial support from the new state of West Virginia's Legislature was sporadic and uncertain, and McMurran frequently spent money from his own pocket for building maintenance. Although the enrollment gradually increased, McMurran became discouraged, resigning in 1882, to establish a partnership in a drugstore called Baker and McMurran in Shepherdstown.

Joseph McMurran, Jr., always regarded his role in establishing Shepherd College as the most important achievement of his life. After leaving the college, he remained a firm supporter of its projects and endeavors, responding repeatedly to its needs when called upon. His final service to the institution was as member of the Board of Trustees, a position to which he was appointed in 1886. McMurran died on Saint Valentine's Day 1902.

S. Ralph Sherrard
Associate Professor of History, 1968-98

McMurran Scholars Association Scholarship

The award was established in 2011 by the McMurran Scholarship Association (MSA) as part of the celebration of the 50th class of McMurran Scholars and in honor of the first scholars, Sandra Osbourn '62, Garland Ott '62, and Nicholas Pappas '63. This annual scholarship is funded through private donations made through the Shepherd University Foundation. It is awarded to McMurran Scholars who pursue graduate studies at Shepherd University. Information about applying for the scholarship maybe found at www.shepherd.edu/mcmurran/mcmurran-scholars-association.

McMurran Scholars Association Endowment

In 2016, to mark the 55th anniversary of Shepherd's highest academic honor, the McMurran Scholars Association leadership issued a challenge to permanently endow the MSA Scholarship and in fall 2017, the \$25,000 goal of a fully endowed scholarship was reached. The McMurran Scholars Association encourages you to make a donation in honor of a McMurran Scholar, an influential faculty member, or someone in your life who has influenced your success.

To make a gift to the MSA Endowed Scholarship, checks may be made payable to the Shepherd University Foundation, P.O. Box 5000, Shepherdstown, WV 25443 or visit our website at shepherduniversityfoundation.org. For assistance, please contact Meg Patterson, 304-876-5021, mpeterso@shepherd.edu

McMurran Scholars Association Scholarship Past Recipients

2011	Laura Gilpin
2012	Ryan Laspina-Carriger
2013	Teresa Dunham-Cavagnaro
2014	Emily Bannon
2015	Heather Harley
2017	Christopher Korcsmaros
2018	Katie Clark
2019	Emily Browning
2020	Portia Dobrzanski
2021	Paige Palmer
2022	Isabella Hawkinberry
2023	Stephen Rivera
2024	Savannah Garrett

Senate Scholarship and Awards Committee

The Scholarship and Awards Committee devises the criteria and appropriate ceremonies for the citation of McMurren Scholars, develops appropriate methods for recognizing outstanding academic scholarship, and manages the Faculty Scholarship. Membership includes two voting faculty representatives from each college, serving a two-year term, a voting chair, and three non-voting members, including the Provost, the Foundation Executive Vice President, and a representative from the McMurren Association. *Bylaws of the Shepherd University Faculty Senate – Article VI, Section 6.3 (d)*

Cindy Vance, CPA, Ph.D.

Co-Committee Chair

Associate Professor of Accounting & Accounting Program Head

College of Business, Recreation, and Education

Sybil Murphy, Ph.D.

Co-Committee Chair

Associate Professor of Physics

College of Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, and Nursing

Craig Cline, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Social Work

College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

Brooke Comer, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Environmental Science

College of Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, and Nursing

Melissa Hall, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Recreation & Sport Studies

College of Business, Recreation, and Education

Yu-Hsuan Liao, D.M.A.

Associate Professor of Music

College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

Zachary Musselman, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Geosciences

College of Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, and Nursing

Zahra Pourabedin, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Business Administration

College of Business, Recreation, and Education

Non-voting Members:

Jack DeRochi, Ph.D.

Provost & Vice-President of Academic Affairs

Katie Swayne

Director of Alumni Affairs

McMurran Scholars Association Representative

Valerie Wright

Senior Administrative Coordinator to the Provost

