167th Commencement celebrates graduates who are stepping into a changing world

By KIMBER WILLIAMS

A theme of transformation is the common thread within Emory’s 167th Commencement ceremony this year.

From an improving job outlook for new graduates to the keynote speaker’s inspiring story of personal and professional transformation and a “changing of the guard” for a long-standing ceremonial tradition, change is in the air.

The Class of 2012, which convened for Commencement exercises on Monday, May 14, began their Emory experience amid one of the nation’s starkest economic downturns. They graduate into a much different world.

Not only have the new graduates witnessed hopeful transformations within the U.S. economy during their time at Emory; they’ve seen improvements in the overall marketplace for job-seeking seniors.

“This year’s graduates have experienced an economic climate change since they began at Emory, and they come into the world full of challenges,” observes President Jim Wagner.

But Emory has prepared them well, and we can take heart from those challenges,” Wagner says.

The ceremony for about 4,200 graduates will attract around 15,000 people to the Quadrangle to witness the pageantry of an academic tradition rich in symbolism and regalia, as well as the meaning behind Emory’s Commencement ceremony.

“Known for changing lives through his surgical skill and support of scholarship, Carson is also noted for overcoming his own troubled youth growing up in Detroit to become a gifted, pioneering neurosurgeon. The Commencement speaker will also receive an honorary doctor of humane letters degree (see page 7).”

According to tradition, the ceremony begins precisely at 8 a.m., as the stirring sound of bagpipes and drums from the Atlanta Pipe Band herald the procession that brings faculty, graduates and dignitaries onto the Quad.

Leading the procession for the day itself is one of the day’s most accomplished Emory students — and current chief marshal for Emory College of Arts and Sciences. Patterson is the first African-American to wear the academic robes of Emory’s highest student honor. The McMullan Award, endowed by Emory alumnus Lamar McMullan, is presented to an undergraduate “for exceptional intellectual achievement, leadership and community service.”

In March — on a last-minute impulse — Pavlak qualified to attend the U.S. Olympic Team Trials to be held in Omaha, Neb., where she’ll compete in the 50-meter freestyle for the chance to join the 2012 U.S. Olympic team.

On the team

By BEVERLY CLARK

Senior Mariangela Jordan is the recipient of the 2012 Lamar McMullan Award, one of Emory’s highest student honors which also comes with $20,000 — no strings attached.

An immigrant from Romania, Jordan grew up under the country’s brutal Communist regime. That experience pushed her to pursue the opportunities available in the United States, where she has gone from starting out as a janitor to driving trucks, to now preparing for graduation from Emory.

“Driving spirit marks winner of McMullan” By BEVERLY CLARK

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The McMullan Award, endowed by Emory alumnus William L. Matheson in honor of his uncle, is given to a graduating senior who exhibits “outstanding citizenship, exceptional leadership and potential for service to his or her community, the nation and the world.”

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Beyond the academics is the athlete: a standout swimmer who has earned nine individual NCAA championships — more than any swimmer in the program’s history — and 20 All-American honors — the second-most by any athlete in Emory’s history. This spring, the co-captain’s talents helped the Emory women’s swimming and diving team win its third-consecutive NCAA Division III Championship.

Now, she’s poised to go where no Emory swimmer has gone before.

In March — on a last-minute impulse — Pavlak qualified to attend the U.S. Olympic Team Trials to be held this summer in Omaha, Neb., where she’ll compete in the 50-meter freestyle for the chance to join the 2012 U.S. Olympic team.

The opportunity to qualify for the Olympic swim trials came suddenly. At the conclusion of the NCAA championship meet, held in Indianapolis, Ind., organizers decided they had enough interest — and the requisite 50-meter pool — to conduct a time trial.

On the team

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An immigrant from Romania, Jordan grew up under the country’s brutal Communist regime. That experience pushed her to pursue the opportunities available in the United States, where she has gone from starting out as a janitor to driving trucks, to now preparing for graduation from Emory.

“To receive this award is very humbling. It’s been a long difficult road. This phase of my life feels like a bonus lap,” she says. “I feel no hope as a kid in Romania. Being free is still amazing, every single day.”

Described by a nominator as having “the intellect of a scholar, the creativity of an artist and the voice of a poet,” Jordan has maintained a near-perfect GPA as an anthropology major in Emory College of Arts and Sciences since transferring here in 2009 from a community college in South Carolina.

She has worked extensively with the local Atlanta refugee community as a tutor and advocate through the International Rescue Committee as part of Emory’s Ethics and Service Leadership program.

Jordan is currently conducting independent research in Clarkeston, Ga. She will continue her research...
Barlett put Emory on path to sustainability

By CAROL CLARK

Peggy Barlett has this advice for graduates: "Don’t listen to the people who say ‘conform to the rules and stay practical.’ Listen to your inner wisdom about where this country needs to be and what you can do to help it get there."

Barlett, the Goodrich C. White Professor of Anthropology and faculty liaison for the Office of Sustainability Initiatives, embodies that advice. She is the recipient of this year’s Thomas Jefferson Award, the University’s premier honor for significant service to the institution through personal activities, influence and leadership.

Barlett joined the Emory faculty in 1976. The campus, the city and the world had a much different mindset. Many people appreciated natural beauty and worked to maintain it. But broad-based approaches to sustainability were largely confined to specialists like Barlett, who studied the intersection of economic, ecological and demographic change among farmers.

Entering the 21st century, amid growing awareness of the greenhouse effect, attitudes began shifting. A pivotal moment at Emory occurred in 1999, when the decision to build a shuttle route in Lullwater forest sparked controversy.

“I began to see more energy on campus around environmental concerns,” Barlett recalls. “I decided to take a year off from research and spend that time seeing if we could galvanize some of that momentum.”

It was a risky move, since sustainability work on campus didn’t fit into the conventional role of faculty. “I thought I was going to run into a brick wall,” Barlett recalls. “One person urged me, ‘Just keep calling the meetings, Peggy! Things will change.’ To my surprise, people started showing up and expressing interest, at all levels. A lot of people who love Emory wanted to help create a better future.”

Barlett began serving as the sustainability point person for faculty, staff, administrators, students and alumni, planting the seeds for Emory to become a nationally recognized green campus. The Piedmont Project, for example, infuses sustainability into the curriculum across disciplines, and has become a model for the country, inspiring hundreds of others.

Meanwhile, she published prolifically. “Sustainability on Campus: Stories and Strategies for Change,” co-edited by Barlett, offers firsthand accounts, both inspiring and practical.

Barlett also helped develop the Sustainability Vision for Emory, adopted by the President’s Cabinet in 2005 as a core principle of the University’s strategic plan. The vision called for an Office of Sustainability Initiatives, and laid out clear and ambitious goals to achieve by 2015. Among them: Reduce average campus energy use by 25 percent, reduce the total waste stream by 65 percent, and secure 75 percent of the food for campus dining facilities from local or sustainably grown sources.

“Ultimately, the goal is to help prepare students to be leaders in a different world,” says Barlett, who doesn’t take a pessimistic view of the sustainability challenges they face. “This is an exciting time to be part of change, so much is happening. Businesses, governments and nonprofits are moving dynamically. Whole new professions are emerging around sustainability.”

By TANIA DOWDY

This time of year is often bittersweet for graduating seniors. “I’m looking forward to every event during Commencement Weekend,” says Lindsey Bomin, an Emory College senior majoring in Spanish and journalism. “It’s my last opportunity to spend time with my friends, so I’m taking advantage of every moment.”

The Emory Alumni Association will celebrate Emory’s 167th Commencement exercises May 10-14 with a weekend full of festivities for Emory’s oldest and newest graduates.

Emory Commencement Weekend events include traditions such as the Candlelight Crossover for graduating seniors and the Corpus Cordis Aureum induction ceremony for alumni celebrating their 50-year reunions.

As part of the Corpus Cordis Aureum induction ceremony, the Jake Ward Golden Heart Award will be presented to Dean Minor ‘38/60C. Established in 2010, the Golden Heart Award seeks to recognize Emory alumni who have demonstrated the values represented tirelessly by budson: “ Jake” Ward ‘38C/39B.

Among the Emory Commencement Weekend highlights is “Man v. Food” host Adam Richman ’96, who will speak to seniors at Class Day on May 10. “It’s great to have an Emory alumnus speak to the seniors this year. It will be very inspiring,” says Gloria Grevas, director of alumni and student programs.

The Emory Alumni Association’s Student Alumni Board President Anna Ross will speak at the Senior Class Reception, which includes the Coke Toast, an Emory tradition. “This is a great opportunity for students to share the Emory Alumni Association’s messages,” says Grevas.

Following the reception, students will cross the Houston Mill Bridge to the Miller-Ward Alumni House, symbolizing their transition from students during the Candlelight Crossover ceremony.

Stay tuned to the EAA’s blog, Facebook page, and Twitter profile for updates throughout the weekend.

See the full schedule of Commencement Weekend activities at www.alumni.emory.edu.

Emory Weekend unites graduates, new and old

By BACCALÆARÆÆ

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Candlelight Crossover

Class Day

Emory Report celebrates more Commencement content online, including web extras like in-depth stories and related videos.

Visit news.emory.edu to:
• See photos from the 2012 ceremony
• View videos, including interviews with graduating seniors and time-lapse scenes.
• Get social, with live updates via Twitter and more.
• Find out who won faculty awards; and read highlights from school diploma ceremonies.
• Hear PhD recipients describe their research and post-graduation plans.

Check www.emory.edu/commencement for all Commencement-related information, including schedules, answers to frequently asked questions, logistics, maps, inclement weather contingencies and more.

Can’t attend the ceremony? The main ceremony will be streamed live online at www.emory.edu/com mencement.

Keep up with campus news this summer

To keep up-to-date with campus events, visit the Emory News Center at news.emory.edu and look for the Emory Report eBulletin in your inbox each week.

Thanks for reading

Congratulations, graduates! We’ve enjoyed sharing your stories—your achievements, endeavors and aspirations during your college career. We wish you well.

Kim Urquhart, editor kim.urquhart@emory.edu
Continued from the cover

"But I thought I'd give it a try." Freeman values lifelong learning, patient listening

By MARY LOFTUS

Whether dealing with decisions about hormone replacement therapy, heart transplants, or end-of-life issues, Sarah Freeman has learned to listen to her patients. "Once I hear my patient's stories, everything starts to make perfect sense," says Freeman, the Betty Tigner Turner Clinical Professor of Nursing at the Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing. "Even research findings that I didn't anticipate." As this year's recipient of the 2012 University Scholar/Teacher award, selected by Emory faculty on behalf of the United Methodist Church Board of Higher Education and Ministry, Freeman specializes in women's health and chronic disease management, and has been instrumental in establishing national accreditation for advanced practice nursing programs. "Early on, I became convinced that treating people after they become sick was not the best way to go," Freeman says. "I want to give them the tools they needed to try to stay healthy or to manage their chronic disease, to be further ahead in the game."

Freeman firmly believes that everyone can have a degree of wellness in their life, no matter their level of disease. "It's a continuum. How do you maximize your health?" "That's what I'm interested in," she says.

Freeman's research interests include how to apply the outcomes of evidence-based medicine, and ethical decision making. She is a faculty fellow at the Emory Center for Ethics.

"Nursing is a practice discipline and a dynamic field," says Freeman, who also worked as a labor and delivery nurse for many years. "It doesn't take long to lose validity with your students or to fall behind. A large part of teaching is role modeling what it means to be a practitioner."

Freeman, who also worked as a labor and delivery nurse for many years, says, "I'm a senior, and I'd always thought the nationals would be my last meet," Pavlak says. "But I thought I'd give it a try." Conditions were far from ideal. Pavlak had competed in 13 races over the past four days, anchor-

Following Commencement, she'll remain on campus this summer to continue training, along with eight other Emory swimmers who hope to qualify for the Olympic trial at later meets. "To represent Emory [at the Olympic trials] gives us an unprecedented level of exposure," Howell says. "I think we're charting some territory right now that's unique. There's not really a blue-

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The most valuable lesson she imparts to students, Freeman believes, is a love of lifelong learning. "There is no way you're going to know about every scenario that is going to come up," she says. "Developing a student's inquisitive mind is one of the most important things a teacher has to do."

Student nurses must also appreciate the research/practice loop. "Always look for what's different, or what needs to be done. Health care will not progress without research," she says. "There's not that sharp a demarcation between the clinician and the researcher—that's where the questions arise." Nurses, says Freeman, must be grounded in the hard sciences and compassionate and caring in their clinical work, but to be great nurses, they must also have the traits of integrity, courage and curiosity. "When you choose health care as a profession," she says, "you take on the responsibility to look after the welfare of others."

Torn between becoming a nurse or a teacher after high school, Freeman soon discovered she could do both. After spending 30 years as a family nurse practitioner, she can't imagine giving up her clinical practice, and continues to work one day a week at the Feminist Women's Health Center in Atlanta. The nurse practitioner movement has its roots in serving the underserved, looking after women who could not get care anywhere else, and helping women prevent unwanted pregnan-

"Nurse practitioners provide a way of filling in the gaps," she says. "I like to say that everybody deserves the care of a nurse practitioner."
CLASS OF 2012: Change is in the air for graduates

woman in Emory history to step into the role, which she will fill for the next three years, an opportunity that she embraces.

“For me, this day is about a recommitment — a time for us all to come together to remember the deepest commitments that draw us to this place,” Patterson says. “I see it as an opportunity to look toward the future while standing in this beautiful capsule that we call the present.”

For detailed information for graduates and guests, including inclement weather information for each school’s ceremony, visit www.emory.edu/commencement.

Oxford College ceremony

Emory alumna Zoe Hicks, chair of the Oxford Board of Councillors, will be the keynote speaker during Commencement exercises for about 300 graduates at Oxford College on Saturday, May 12.

The ceremony begins at 10 a.m., as a bagpiper leads the procession onto the Oxford College Green. A reception will follow on the lawn at Haygood Hall.

Oxford College recognizes students who have successfully completed their sophomore year in preparation for continuing on to Emory’s Atlanta campus.

Immediately following Commencement, guests are invited to a groundbreaking for the new Library and Academic Commons.

For information, visit oxford.emory.edu.

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Welcome Destination Zero Waste

Emory is composting food waste in addition to collecting recyclables throughout its 167th Commencement celebrations for the Commencement Brunch, the President’s Open House, and graduation ceremonies organized at the eight schools around campus.

Partner with us to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills.
Service shines spotlight on Dunn

By BEVERLY CLARK

Senior Evan Dunn spent much of his time in college involved in the type of behind-the-scenes service and quiet leadership not likely to attract the spotlight. That is, until now.

Dunn is the 2012 recipient of Emory’s highest student honor, the Marion Luther Brittain Award, which is presented each year to a graduate who has demonstrated exemplary service to both the university and the greater community without expectation of recognition.

Candidates are required to demonstrate a strong character, meritorious service and sense of integrity. The award comes with $5,000.

“Tm honored and honored to receive this. I hope I can live up to the expectations of this award, and give back as much as I can in my life,” says Dunn, a political science and history major at Emory College with the Bonner Leaders Program, a “definitive experience for me that set the stage for everything else I’ve done,” Dunn says. The Bonner Leaders Program gives students leadership training and opportunities for ongoing, in-depth service work, as well as a scholarship stipend to provide financial support in place of a job.

CUTTINO AWARD

Rusche comes full circle as mentor and role model

By LESLIE KING

English professor Harry Rusche says that receiving the 2012 George P. Cuttino Award for Excellence in Mentoring is special, “because when I first came to Emory, George Cuttino was my mentor. He was one of the best influences on my career.”

Established in 1997 by trustee John T. Glover, the mentoring award was named in honor of the late George P. Cuttino who was known as a guide and counselor beyond the classroom.

Cuttino became a mentor for Rusche. “I watched the way George interacted with his students and colleagues. When dealing with students early in my career I would often ask myself, ‘What would George do?’,” he says.

“I was working on history and literature and he helped me with my first two important articles in The English Historical Review.” Rusche continues, “He always asked me to serve on committees with him. He, my wife Sue, and I became close friends.”

Rusche’s teaching and research interests are Shakespeare and current trends in recent poetry. “As for my own work, an important aspect was the beginning of digital scholarship when several of us won a Culpeper Grant that allowed us to set up summer programs for faculty and graduate students,” he says. “The program not only introduced the faculty to teaching with computers, but prepared a number of graduate students to leave Emory for positions at other colleges with skills in technology and teaching.”

He has three ongoing projects, all of which are online: “Shakespeare and the Players,” a survey of the many English and American actors who played Shakespeare’s characters for late Victorian and Edwardian audiences; “Shakespeare Illustrated,” exploring 19th century paintings, criticism and productions of Shakespeare’s plays and their influence on one another; and “The Great War, 1914-1918,” a collection of pictures and poetry in collaboration with Emory Libraries’ Beck Center.

The 2012-2013 year will be Rusche’s 50th year of teaching. Among his honors are the Emory Williams Distinguished Teaching Award early in his career in 1966, the Emory Williams Distinguished Teaching Award in 1987, and his appointment to the Arthur M. Blank Distinguished Teaching chair in 1992.

Tips for graduates

Thanks to the Emory community members who answered a question posed on Emory University’s Facebook page: What is your advice for graduating seniors?

Here’s a sampling:

• Think about the personal qualities that you developed while at Emory and trust them to carry you into the rest of the world.

• Don’t borrow what you can’t pay back and only lend what you can afford to lose.

• Take a stroll or jog in Lullwater Preserve before you graduate, if you haven’t done so already . . . beauty and peacefulness hidden right on campus!

• Remember, as graduates, you still represent the university in your personal and professional lives.

• Chase your passions now . . . and when they change, chase those too.

To see the full list, visit Emory University on Facebook (www.facebook.com/EmoryUniversity).

Commencement Portrait Sessions

Barnes & Noble Bookstore @ Emory University

May 13, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
May 14, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Portraits can be taken individually or with friends and family.

Please call 404.727.6227 for information and pricing.
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HONORARY DEGREES

Multi-talented honorees excel in arts and sciences

Five individuals will receive honorary degrees during Emory’s 167th Commencement ceremony:

Benjamin S. Carson Sr., the 2012 Commencement speaker, overcame challenges of poverty, poor schools and low self-esteem to become a full professor of neurosurgery, oncology, plastic surgery and pediatrics at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. As the inaugural recipient of a professorship dedicated in his name, he is now the Benjamin S. Carson Sr., MD, and Dr. Evelyn Spiro, RN, Professor of Pediatric Neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins. Carson’s achievements include pioneering medical procedures for conjoined twins. He has written several books.

Among his many honors, Carson has been named one of the nation’s 20 foremost physicians and scientists and a Library of Congress “Living Legend,” and he has received the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Carson will receive an honorary doctor of humane letters degree at Commencement.

Camille Billops, artist, will receive an honorary doctor of humane letters degree.

Catharine R. Stimpson, a leader in the advancement of graduate education, will receive an honorary doctor of letters. She is dean emerita of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences of New York University. Among her many contributions to the arts, she has donated to the Hatch-Billops Collection, an archive of African American cultural materials that they have donated to the Robert W. Woodruff Library.

She has received a number of awards for contributions to the arts.

James V. Hatch, writer, will receive an honorary doctor of letters. The author of several books on African American theater, Hatch is an emeritus professor in the graduate theater program at City University of New York.

Together with his wife Camille Billops, Hatch established the Hatch-Billops Collection of African American cultural materials, which they have donated to the Robert W. Woodruff Library.

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Mariangela Jordan is the 2012 recipient of the Lucius Lamar McMullan Award.

Moved to the United States, she took any and all jobs, working as a janitor, as a roofer, and in a gas station. “It took me a little while to figure out the American system, but I knew that in order to succeed I would need more education,” she says.

To offer herself “the gift of education,” Jordan hit the road and crisscrossed the country as a big rig trucker driver for one year, saving up for her education while sending money home to Romania to support her mother and grandmother.

“Emory University is amazing. I’m not sure if my peers really understand the access they have here: to be able to walk into a library with millions of books by the simple swipe of your student card and to work directly with faculty interested in your success,” she says. “Not to mention the unlimited opportunities to develop individual potentials, no matter what their interests are, that Emory offers its students.”

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Volunteers help the day run smoothly for people and events

By KIMBER WILLIAMS

As a contract coordinator for the planning, design and construction unit of Campus Services, Robin Mitchell thrives on the frenetic energy of a campus that is constantly changing. So during Commencement, you’ll find her where she’s most comfortable — amid the adrenaline-stoked pool of amateur shutterbugs clustered near the central stage in a space known as “the photo pit.”

For most of her 14 years here at Emory, Mitchell has served alongside the 150 to 200 campus volunteers who help make Commencement flow smoothly each year. In fact, those volunteers are the critical behind-the-scenes fuel that help run the event, says Michael Kloss, executive director of the Office of University Events.

From ushers, ambassadors and “way-finders” to a posse of “chair wranglers” who set up, arrange and break down some 14,000 chairs on the Quad, Emory’s volunteer workforce strives to help graduates and families have a “flawless experience,” Kloss says.

“So many people are working well before sunrise to make sure that nothing gets in the way of an ideal graduation experience that has been building, in some families, for generations,” Kloss says. “People really want to help — many of our volunteers come back year after year.”

Mitchell coordinates a team of volunteers who manage the photo pit, where guests and family members will gather to nab a snapshot as Emory College graduates return to their seats after diploma presentation.

Think controlled chaos: thousands of parental paparazzi assembled in alphabetical order craning to get a glimpse of their graduate. Even though Mitchell assures that a professional photographer will get a great shot, she understands the urge to capture the moment themselves.

The job requires a delicate balance — make parents feel as welcome as possible, while letting them know there’s a system. “It’s got to be a very smooth-running machine, and most of the time, it goes beautifully,” she adds.

Frenzied though it seems, Mitchell finds satisfaction in the work. “For me, it’s very gratifying and grounding to annually remember why I’m here, and that is service to students. It’s nice to be reminded that this is an important starting point for young people’s lives.”

Emory College staff member Laura Papotto is one of the many volunteers who help make Commencement flow smoothly.

Can you spot the five differences between these two photographs?

Visit news.emory.edu/rodeo to watch a time-lapse video of the annual “chair rodeo,” in which volunteers set up 14,000 chairs to prepare for Commencement.