mace carrier, **Dr. S. Walker Blanton**. He joined our faculty in 1968. Thank you and congratulations on your 50 years of service to JU.

# INVOCATION

<u>President Cost:</u> To offer our invocation, we now invite to the podium an outstanding young alumna, Class of 2010, **Ms. Audrey Moran**. **Audrey** is a great friend to JU who contributed significantly during her time on campus, including in the leadership of the **Alpha Delta Pi** sorority and as a student athlete. **Audrey** is also the 8th member of the **Moran** family to become a Dolphin, a streak we hope to see continue!

young JU alumni as a member of the Alumni Board of Governors from 2013 to 2015, and now as a Board member of The Graduates of The Last Decade, GOLD Phin Society, so you graduating seniors will be hearing from her again very soon. Audrey...

Audrey Moran: Thank you, President Cost

exposure And now, I ask that you join me in applauding my fellow graduates, as we leave this campus and enter a brave new world, **Jacksonville University** 

<u>President Cost:</u> Thank you, Stephania. She chose to leave her family and home to be a part of our family, and we are so grateful for **Stephania** sharing her considerable talents with us over the past six years. We look forward to following her career in accounting and the corporate financial world.

As we have evolved and matured as an academic institution, this year, for the first time in our 84-

To our dedicated faculty, who lead by example in scholarship and spirit: we commend you and we thank you.

And to our staff, at all levels: I offer my personal thanks for the extraordinary work you do every day for these students and this University.

here thanks to your hard work.

e to be a JU Dolphin and a part of our growing Jacksonville University Family.

# INTRODUCTIONS & THANKS

<u>President Cost:</u> Now, we recognize members of our Board of Trustees celebrating Commencement with us today. They are Dane Grey, Jamie Shelton and Chuck Wodehouse. Thank you all for your leadership and service. Ours is an extraordinary Board with tremendous talent and a commitment to excellence that is supporting and amplifying the momentum you see on campus today.

It is now my sincere privilege to introduce the senior leadership team of your university, both on the platform and in the audience. Thank you for joining us for this auspicious occasion. Each of you, please stand briefly when your name is called:

Senior Vice President for University and Academic Affairs, Provost, Dr. Donnie Horner Associate Provost, **Dr. Bill Crosby** Associate Provost, Dr. Lee Ann Clements Senior Vice President for Student Affairs, Dr. Kristie Gover Senior Vice President for Communications and Enrollment and JU alumna. Class of 1986, Ms. Margaret Dees Chief Financial Officer, Randy Freebourn Dean of the Brooks Rehabilitation College of Healthcare Sciences who will become Acting Provost next week, **Dr. Christine Sapienza** Dean of the Davis College of Business, Dr. Don Capener Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Dr. Sandra Coyle Dean of the College of Fine Arts, Dr. Henry Rinne Director of Athletics, Mr. Alex Ricker-Gilbert Dr. Quinton White Director of the Jacksonville University Public Policy Institute, Mr. Rick Mullaney Commanding Officer of our NROTC program and JU alumnus, Class of 1996, Capt. Glen Leverette Chief Admissions Officer, Tom Taggart Professor and Chair of English, Division of Humanities, and our 2018-2019 Professor of the Year, Dr. Julie Brannon Faculty in Residence, Dr. Ramesh Adhikari

Naismith Basketball Hall of Famer, voted one of the top 50 professional basketball players of all time, 1971 JU alum and Special Assistant to the JU President, Mr. Artis Gilmore

Chair of the Faculty Assembly, Dr. Mary Gipson

Directing our ceremonies out on the green today, Director of the Office of the President, and proud JU alumna, Class of 2011, Ms. Diana Donovan Also assisting behind the scenes today, JU alumni and our 2017/2018 Presidential Fellows, Mr. Jack Burns and Mr. Luke Myhree, both of whom will be starting full-time positions next week here at our University, in Athletics and Finance, respectively.

Thanks to all of you for being with us.

# KEYNOTE

## President Cost:

proud JU Alumnus, loyal athletics supporter and treasured friend of the university.

After spending 25 years of service with the **US Navy**– of which the last 15 years were spent as a Commanding Officer or Executive Officer-he retired as a Captain. His faithful and meritorious service included tours with the

soon have in common a graduate degree from Tom, you can do

this. You can deliver a great message for the Class of 2018.

When I told Cheryl, my wife of 27 years, she was excited for me, but probably thinking, great, one more thing to add to our already busy lives. My 12 year-

Next was Callan, my almost-15 year old daughter, and an IB student at Nease High School, who, by the way Just a little bragging there

impart words of wisdom or something? Why did they select you?

She then made me keenly aware of the fact that this would very likely be recorded, or

you do, no lame jokes and n

shuffle, as originally planned, but you should know, I can do it (warm your hands, clap your hands, dolphin shuffle, twirl your arms, the robot, start low and fist pump, dolphin shuffle).

The ultimate mission of Jacksonville University is to prepare every student for life-long success through applied learning, academic excellence, research, leadership, and service.

Jacksonville University core values align with my own, and likely yours as well. We believe in quality learning and living experiences, faculty and student engagement, peak environments, academic freedom, honesty, integrity, mutual respect, and service to the University, the community, and our society at large.

Let me circle back to integrity for just a moment.

our U.S. military

admire.

When I was a young Naval Officer, 33 years ago, one of my Captains spoke to us about our integrity. out to share 33 years from now. Integrity is the quality of being honest, of having strong moral principles, and adhering to strong ethical principles. Integrity is the state of being whole, entire, or undiminished. This is my Integrity Box.

You have one too, just like this.

When you live a life of principles, wherever you are, and do the right thing instead of the

others, etc., your Integrity Box remains whole.

#### But when

others, or when you make poor decisions, your Integrity Box is affected and before you t let this happen to you.

Another hard yet valuab

applied learning and practical knowledge and my second nugget of wisdom, is communication.

The art of communication and communication skills are vital to every organization, whether it be a household, a hospital, a corporation, a school, or a start-up company. And, when I say communication, I mean real, live face-to-face conversation, not just emails,

Beverly and Jack Keigwin, your name is on the school, so thank you for everything you do in support of Jacksonville University.

Dean Sapienza and Associate Dean Bergman, congratulations to your entire academic team for creating this dynamic environment and helping to improve healthcare across our nation, one graduate at a time.

And I believe this is the perfect segue to my next and final point regarding service to others

e heard Pre to the University, this community, and society as a whole. Personally, integrity and communication are top priorities for me, but service rises to the top of that list as the most important.

I would not have spent 25 years in the U.S. Navy, serving and protecting our country, if this I certainly

Jacksonville University does an outstanding job supporting and recognizing our Veterans, active duty military, NROTC, and others connected to our brave men and women in uniform.

This very evening, 22 Active Duty Military and Veterans will walk across this stage and receive higher degrees.

Will those graduates please stand, for just a moment, and be recognized?

Thank you for your service.

### Davis College of Business Executive

Advisory Board, another service role I thoroughly enjoy.

Aside from activities with my family, my favorite volunteer service are the hours I spend on this campus. Right here. With you. I feel like I know so many of often. Cheering on the Dolphin–You heard during my introduction about my season during basketball season, Saturday afternoon football games, baseball, softball, and lacrosse games. Athletic Director Alex Ricker-Gilbert, Mindy McCord and John Galloway of the teams, are all great friends to me and my family. want to say congratulations to Jamie Seim, EMBA student; Henry Crayton, MBA student, and Maria Juliana Fueyo egree.

Congratulations and thanks are also in order for their faculty advisors and coaches: **Abdel Missa** and **Dr. Daphne Wang**.

A qui

One out of every 4 JU undergraduate students is a student athlete. The current JU student athlete GPA is a phenomenal 3.29.

At any given time, we have 20 to 25 JU student athletes working for **Black Knight**. You are excellent students, you are competitive athletes, you demonstrate phenomenal teamwork, and you are in demand! Well done!

There are many other folks here tonight who should get special recognition, and though I

Baker

## College out of Michigan.

They have all completed the Doctor of Nursing Practice program, a huge accomplishment.

### Dean Leslie Morgan of Baker College

hearty congratulations and says she needs you all back in Michigan soon!

### Jacksonville!

One individual receiving the Doctor of Nursing Practice tonight completed the program from **New Mexico**. Congratulations **Chris Rumsey**! I love seeing the evidence of how far and wide this University reaches and impacts lives.

There are 5 baseball players walking across this platform tonight, all graduating with You have some mighty big shoes to fill as I know at least one former JU baseball player who went on to do some pretty amazing things. Good luck!

There is a parent and past classmate of mine in the audience tonight who graduated and walked this very stage with me about a dozen years ago. The first time I met son, **Evan**, he was only 10 years old. Tonight, **Evan** receives his MBA. Congratulations **Evan** and **Scott**!

When each recipient is announced, we ask that you stand and be recognized, and at the we invite the recipients of these distinguished awards to join President Cost at the podium to receive their award and take a commemorative photo.

These three graduates are receiving the Academic Excellence Awards for Communication Sciences and Disorders from the Brooks Rehabilitation College of Healthcare Sciences: Corinne Kelleher, Emma Riley, and Joanna Yeakel.

Congratulations, ladies!

Also this evening, as this is our first-ever Graduate Commencement ceremony, we are proud to present the at the graduate level, in recognition of a student who demonstrates exemplary leadership, character, academic performance, and service.

Graduating with her

This completes the awarding of all master-level degrees.

In a moment of sheer humility, our JU family taught me an important lesson: If at first you do succeed, definitely try again. Perhaps try with a new solution. A different approach. Be creative. The world we live in today has some massive issues that you and I will have to tackle together: Sustainability, Data Privacy, Global trade, Education. It will be up to us to

pulling really hard in one direction, remember, sometimes, you just have to push.

waiting here, directly behind this platform at our Faculty Corner, to embrace and congratulate you. And remember, to our student award recipients, please be sure to meet me immediately following the ceremony at the podium to receive your awards, then we will walk over together and take pictures at the Dolphin statues.

At this time, we welcome back **Michaela** and **Skyler** to lead us in the **Jacksonville University Alma Mater**. You can find the words on page 3 of your program. We invite you to please stand and remain standing for the benediction following the Alma Mater.

[President Cost returns to his seat & remains standing.]

<u>Michael and Skyler</u>: On the banks of the wide St. Johns stands our alma mater dear, where by striving and through our friendships, we find a pathway clear.

thoughts return as through this busy world we roam, for our memories will always lead us back to our college home.

[On conclusion of the Alma Mater, The RiverTones depart, & all remain standing. Tim Cost returns to the podium.]

<u>President Cost:</u> Thank you. It is moving to hear our Alma Mater on such a memorable evening.

[Audrey Moran proceeds to podium]

We welcome back **Audrey Moran** to conclude our ceremony by offering the benediction. Audrey?

[President Cost steps aside & remains standing, & Audrey Moran to the podium.]

<u>Audrey Moran:</u> Friends, as we go forth from this celebration, may the joy and hope we feel today serve and guide you, as you follow your dreams and find your place in the world. May you remember the power of positive intention and action, and the value of our human spirit in a world full of opportunity. May you use your gifts and talents to make meaningful relationships, build communities, and spread compassion. And may you always come safely home to your JU family with pride and peace in your hearts. Amen. [Audrey is seated & President Cost returns to podium]

<u>President Cost:</u> Thank you, **Audrey**. Tonight, we will dispense with a formal recessional, so that you all can immediately celebrate with family, friends, and faculty. Again, you are all invited to stay, take your time, and enjoy the celebration. Please feel free to take photos at our beautiful dolphin statues, here on the platform, or anywhere y your time, your big night!

Ladies and gentlemen, congratulations and good evening. We are adjourned.