



HOWARD
UNIVERSITY

LBAT



OFFICE OF MILITARY AND VETERANS SERVICES
(OMVS)

— 2ND ANNUAL —

RED, WHITE & BISON *Gala*



HONORING OUR VETERANS
AND THOSE WHO SERVE





SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

RED CARPET WELCOME & ICON HOUR

7:00 PM - Welcome & Call to Order

Marcedi Phillips, SVA President &
Morgan Strickland, SVA Vice President

Arrival of the Official Party

Presentation of the Colors & National Anthem

POW / MIA / KIA Table Acknowledgement

Student Veterans Peterson Boyer & Kensley Pierre

Invocation and Blessing

Dean Dr. Bernard Richardson,
Dean of the Rankin Memorial Chapel

Dinner

Remarks

Sgt Maj (Ret.) Michael Mack, Assistant Director of Military &
Veterans Services

Remarks

Dr. Paris Adon, Director of Student Services

Remarks

Dr. Cynthia Evers, Senior Vice President of Student Affairs

Introduction of Wall of Honor Inductee

Joshua Gaither, SVA Treasurer

Keynote Address & Honoree Acceptance

Col. Julian Gaither, Class of 1995





AWARDS PRESENTATION

Military Community Advocate Award

Exemplary Student Leader Award

University Service & Impact Award

Academic Excellence and Innovation Award

The Bison Warrior Scholar Award



SPEAKERS OF THE EVENING & GUEST OF HONOR

Sgt Maj (Ret.) Michael Mack
Assistant Director, OMVS

Sergeant Major Michael Mack enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in June 1986, dedicating over 30 years of service and 13 duty stations to every element of the Marine Air-Ground Task Force.



His leadership billets spanned from Chief Drill Instructor and Company First Sergeant at Marine Barracks 8th & I, to Sergeant Major of the Wounded Warrior Regiment and joint duty within the Office of the Secretary of Defense. His professional military education is equally distinguished, having graduated as the Honor Graduate of Combat Enhancement Training and receiving the Leadership Award at the Staff Non-Commissioned Officer Advanced Academy.

Sergeant Major Mack earned his bachelor's degree magna cum laude from Georgetown University as a Class Distinguished Graduate and Tropaia Award recipient, and is currently two courses away from completing his MBA in Project Management.

He retired on July 1, 2016, and went on to serve as Director of Oversight and Compliance at the U.S. AbilityOne Commission and Lead for the Pentagon's Office of Veterans Services. He remains active with the Marine Corps Association and Foundation Board of Governors, the West Coast Drill Instructor Association, the Marine Barracks 8th & I Alumni Association, and the Wounded Warrior Regiment Mentor Program.

His personal awards include the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal, and numerous other campaign and service decorations. Sergeant Major Mack has three adult children and is married to the former Charlene B. Johnson of King George, Virginia.



Dr. Paris Adon

Director of Student Services

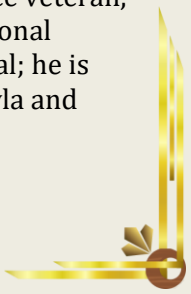
Dr. Paris L. Adon is a lifelong educator, executive coach, and former K-12 principal who holds a Doctorate in Educational Leadership, alongside master's degrees in Ministry and Administration, and a bachelor's in Special Education. His early career spanned roles as a Special Education Coordinator, Program Manager for DC Public Schools, and Principal of the



Joseph P. Kennedy School, where he established a first-of-its-kind diploma program for students with disabilities and saved over \$5 million through in-house programming. A former preschool owner and adjunct professor at Grand Canyon University, Dr. Adon has also completed executive coursework at Cornell and Harvard and holds board certification in special education.

Today, Dr. Adon serves as Director of the Office of Student Services at Howard University, overseeing Military and Veterans Services, Student Accessibility, Student Advocacy and Support, the Nourish HU Student Pantry, and the Interpersonal Violence Prevention Program. As Chair of the Bison Intervention Team, he implemented the university's first non-clinical case management program and expanded intervention strategies using his extensive NABITA certifications. Under his leadership, the office has secured significant grant funding—including a \$580,000 Center for Veteran Student Success grant—while building student-centered systems that pair operational rigor with genuine care.

A Prince George's County native, his dedication to the military community is shaped by his father, a Desert Storm Air Force veteran, and his grandparents, who are laid to rest at Quantico National Cemetery. His connection to Howard is also deeply personal; he is married to Quitiqua Adon, PA-C, and their two children, Nyla and Paris II, are current Howard University students.





Dr. Cynthia Evers

Senior Vice President of Student Affairs

For over 25 years, Dr. Evers has strengthened institutional infrastructures to cultivate engaging, student-centered environments that drive success and retention. Holding a Doctorate of Education in Higher Education Administration, her distinguished career encompasses executive leadership roles as a Student Affairs Officer across multiple institutions.



In these capacities, Dr. Evers has partnered collaboratively with faculty, boards of trustees, and community leaders to foster campus climates that champion holistic learning and build a robust sense of community. A dedicated advocate for both students and staff, she remains deeply committed to advancing initiatives within the Division of Student Affairs and providing strategic guidance on student engagement and development.



**WILDEST
DREAMS**
HOWARD UNIVERSITY HOMECOMING 2026

The logo features the words "WILDEST DREAMS" in large, bold, blue capital letters. The letter "I" in "WILDEST" is replaced by a red circle. The letter "E" in "WILDEST" has a red horizontal bar. The letter "D" in "DREAMS" has a red circle. Below this, the words "HOWARD UNIVERSITY HOMECOMING 2026" are written in smaller, bold, blue capital letters. The letter "I" in "HOWARD" is replaced by a red circle. The letter "E" in "UNIVERSITY" has a red horizontal bar. The letter "D" in "HOMECOMING" has a red circle.



2026 Wall of Honor Inductee Alumni, Class of 1995

Chaplain, Col. Julian C. Gaither,

Chaplain, Colonel Julian C. Gaither, D.Min., a native of Atlanta, Georgia, serves as the Chief, Plans and Programs Division in the Office of the Chief of Chaplains, Department of the Air Force at the Pentagon. He advises the Air Force & Space Force Chief of Chaplains on enterprise-level plans, policies, and strategic initiatives supporting 700,000 Airmen and Guardians and 2.3 million family members worldwide. He leads the implementation of the Chaplain Corps Strategic Plan, oversees policy development, and directs resource production for 2,100 Chaplain Corps personnel across the Total Force.

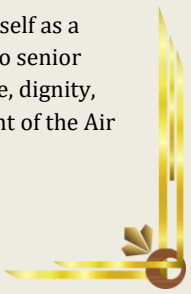


An ordained minister in the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, Chaplain Gaither entered active duty in 1999. His career includes assignments in medical, operational, joint, academic, and strategic environments, with deployments to Turkey, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates. He has served as Executive Officer to the Chief of Chaplains, Joint Base Senior Chaplain at Andrews, Wing Chaplain in the CENTCOM AOR, Senior Chaplain at the U.S. Air Force Academy, and pastored the Vogelweh Gospel Service in Ramstein, Germany.

A 1995 graduate of Howard University, he holds advanced degrees from United Theological Seminary, Air Command and Staff College, National War College, and a Doctor of Ministry from Wesley Theological Seminary, where he also serves as an Adjunct Professor. He is a life member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., and a 1993 initiate of the Beta Chapter.

Chaplain Gaither is married to Dr. Lesley Edwards-Gaither, a two-time Howard graduate. They have three sons: Jonathan, Howard University Class of 2023; Joshua, Class of 2028; and Gabriel, a sophomore at Woodson High School in Fairfax, Virginia.

Across three decades of service, Chaplain Gaither has distinguished himself as a strategic thinker, compassionate pastor, educator, and trusted advisor to senior leaders. His career reflects a deep commitment to the spiritual resilience, dignity, and well-being of Airmen, Guardians, and families across the Department of the Air Force.





TEAM CREDITS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

OMVS TEAM

Sgt Maj (Ret.) Michael Mack - Assistant Director

Deja Cousley - Veteran Affairs Coordinator

Gregory Manora - Veteran Affairs Coordinator

Student Veterans of America Executive Board

Marcedi Phillips – President

Morgan Strickland – Vice President

Kameryn Clark – Secretary

Joshua Gaither – Treasurer

Gabrielle Cunningham – Social Media Officer

Xavier Rodriguez – Membership Officer

EVENT PRODUCTION

Amira Bell - Program Design

Jayden Griffin - Videography & Photography Lead

Ambriah Jenkins - Decor and Guest Experience





SOCIAL MEDIA TEAM

Elizabeth Allen Perez

Gabrielle Cunningham

Avani Harrison

Andrea Pool

TASK FORCE ROMEO

Phylicia Adams

Peterson Boyer

Karrington Cummings

Ajia Gaines

Xavier Guardo

Nala Herron

Melania Marsh

Dani Moore-King

Zayli Simone

Soya Pearson

Xavier Rodriguez



Kirsty Williams
Bryanna Whitehead
Jaelyn Young
Emma Brisendine





HOWARD UNIVERSITY ALMA MATER

Reared against the eastern sky
Proudly there on hilltop high,
Far above the lake so blue
Stands old Howard firm and true.

There she stands for truth and right,
Sending forth her rays of light,
Clad in robes of majesty;
O Howard, we sing of thee.

Be thou still our guide and stay
Leading us from day to day;
Make us true and leal and strong,
Ever bold to battle wrong.

When from thee we've gone away,
May we strive for thee each day
As we sail life's rugged sea,
O Howard, we'll sing of thee.

OFFICE OF MILITARY & VETERANS SERVICES
KNOWLEDGE HONOR SERVICE



