



Hitimu - Multicultural Graduation Celebration

Friday, May 15, 2026

Center Dining Room, Benham-Pence Student Center



Hosted by the William A. McClain Center

PROGRAM

WELCOME

Dr. Christian M. M. Brady, President

LIBATION CEREMONY & BLESSING OF THE FOOD

Dr. Jawwad Love and Dr. Tammi Love

DINNER*

PERFORMANCE

"A Concrete Butterfly"

Byron Griffin & Clara Griffin

CLASS OF 2026 REFLECTIONS

Keita Mukasa

Gabriela Gonzalez

Mary Osiwoga

GRADUATE RECOGNITION

The **McClain Center Organization Dedication Award** is given to graduating students who have, over the years, contributed time, love, and talent to the causes of the intercultural organizations that work closely with the McClain Center.

The **Bridge-Builder Award** is given to a graduating student who has demonstrated commitment to diversity and has consistently insisted upon cross-cultural conversation among students, faculty, and staff.

The **Outstanding Scholar Award** is given to graduating students with a 3.0 GPA or better.

The **Perseverance Award** is given to a graduating student whose commitment to the completion of the degree, while overcoming obstacles along the journey, is awe-inspiring.

The **Passing Light Award** is given to a graduating student who demonstrates their love for Wittenberg through their campus involvement over the years and is most likely to serve Wittenberg and give back to the Wittenberg community as active alumni.

ALUMNI REFLECTION

Amya L. Brown, MBA, '23

Sales Support Specialist, Chemical Distribution Company

PERFORMANCE

"Ants to Oblivion"

Byron Griffin

PRESENTATION OF STOLES & LEIS

Mentors/Advocates/Allies

Kenneth Goodrum, Director McClain Center & Joi Garrett Scales,
Vice President and Dean of Student Engagement

CLOSING REMARKS

Joi A. Garrett Scales

Vice President and Dean of Student Engagement

**Raffle winners will be announced during the dinner portion of the program.*

About Hitimu-Multicultural Celebration

Originally started as the Black Congratulatory Dinner sponsored by Concerned Black Students (CBS) in May 2018 to honor and celebrate the achievements of black graduates, the dinner became known as Hitimu for the 2021 commencement season. Hitimu means "graduate" in Swahili. Having a brief recess in Spring 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the re-envisioned Hitimu resumed in Spring 2021 recognizing the accomplishments of Wittenberg's black and latinx student populations. Hitimu continues to evolve and is an opportunity for students to celebrate the accomplishment of graduation while honoring and celebrating the traditions of the cultural communities in which students belong.

About the William A. McClain Center

The William A. McClain Center is a welcoming place grounded in helping each student find a sense of belonging and purpose by helping students foster connections, assisting students with transitions and adjustments, and providing intentional support for students who are most vulnerable or at-risk. The McClain Center is a place where students can come as they are and explore who they are meant to become. We encourage students to find their voices and to tell their stories so that others may relate and/or learn. We embolden students to open their minds to ideas and philosophies different from their own so that they are increasingly prepared to engage successfully in our global community.

The McClain Center was dedicated to William A. McClain in 2004 as the William A. McClain Culture House in recognition of his service to the community. The house was later renamed to the William A. McClain Center for Diversity in 2012 to reflect the student organization occupants of the space; Concerned Black Students, American International Alliance, and Gay/Straight Alliance. McClain called the dedication a “crowning moment” in his life. McClain, a Springfield native, was the first African American to win both the state and national Intercollegiate Oratorical Association contests held at Muskingum College in February 1934, and was an overall accomplished student. His professional career was even more accomplished, demonstrating his ambition and perseverance by becoming the first African American member of the Cincinnati Bar Association despite being denied twice and later serving as the first African American to hold the title of City Solicitor in Cincinnati, Ohio from 1963 to 1972. Upon William’s passing in 2014, Wittenberg University President Laurie M. Joyner had this to say about William Andrew McClain, “Throughout his life, he inspired generations of colleagues, students, peers, friends and acquaintances to use their own lives to make a difference. His willingness to go beyond the ordinary, to encourage, to break new ground, and to motivate touched countless individuals, as did his desire to serve humanity and to step up when called upon to do so.”

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