



WESTERN GOVERNORS UNIVERSITY®

COMMENCEMENT IN CINCINNATI

SATURDAY, MAY 4, 2024



OUR MISSION

To change lives for the better by creating pathways to opportunity.

OUR PROMISE

We endeavor to make opportunity work for everyone by improving quality, access, and outcomes of education through diverse, innovative programs, systems, and technologies.

The flower arrangements displayed on stage for today's commencement are placed in memory of those students and graduates who have passed away. Our thoughts are with their families and friends.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Graduates,

On behalf of all of us at WGU, I want to congratulate you and recognize all of the hard work that has led to today. Only you know the many sacrifices you made to complete your degree. This is your moment to pause and reflect on this significant accomplishment—and celebrate this life-changing milestone!

It has been our privilege to be on this journey alongside you, and we share in your excitement and pride. Your degree has the potential to change your life and make a real difference to your family and community. As you join the ranks of more than 325,000 WGU graduates, we hope you will stay in touch through the Alumni Association.

Again, thank you for joining us today. We are thrilled to share this day with you and your loved ones. Congratulations!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott D. Pulsipher". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Scott D. Pulsipher, President
Western Governors University

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER



Grandmaster Maurice Ashley

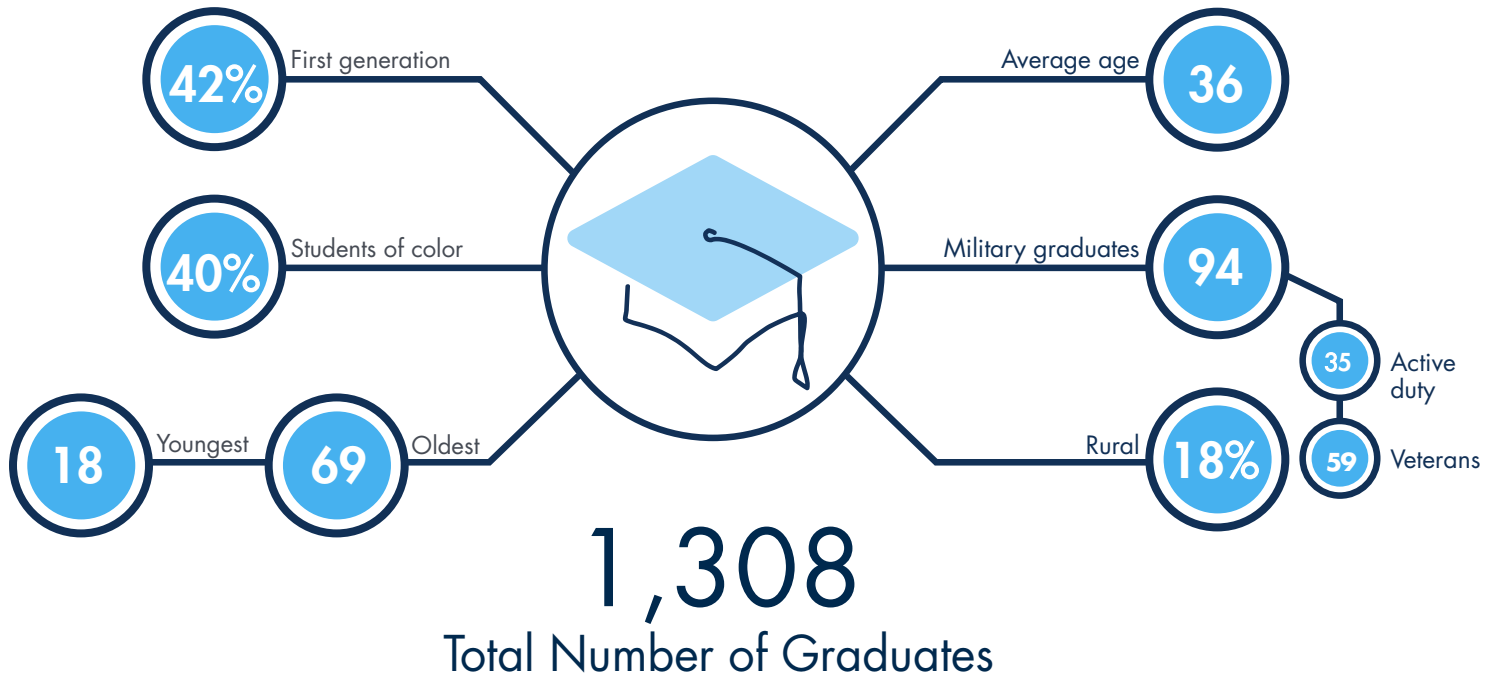
Maurice Ashley made history in 1999 when he became the first African American chess Grandmaster. He is a national championship coach, many time author, chess commentator, puzzle inventor, video course creator, and motivational speaker.

Maurice has spent decades providing dynamic live tournament coverage of world-class chess competitions and matches. His high-energy, unapologetic, and irreverent commentary combines Brooklyn street smarts with professional ESPN-style sports analysis. He has covered every class of elite event, including the World Chess Championships, the US Chess Championships, the Grand Chess Tour, and the legendary “Man vs. Machine” matches between Garry Kasparov and IBM’s Deep Blue.

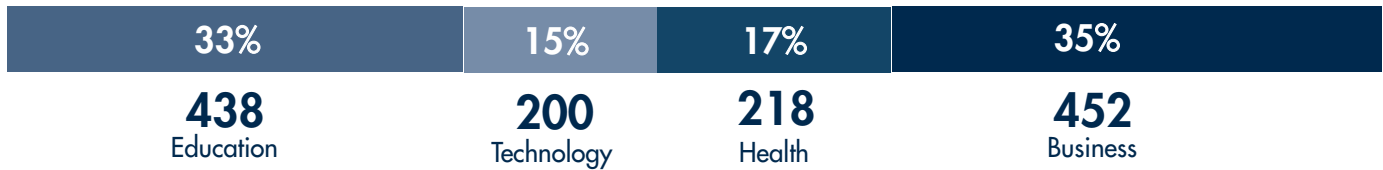
Traveling the world as an ardent spokesperson for the many character-building effects of chess, Maurice shares how chess principles and strategies can be applied to improve business practices and assist with personal growth. Maurice also acts as a master of ceremonies and inspirational speaker at business conferences and high-class chess events.

Maurice has received multiple community service awards from city governments, universities, and community groups for his work. In recognition of his immense contribution to the game, he was inducted into the US Chess Hall of Fame in 2016 and the Brooklyn Technical High School Hall of Fame in 2018. His latest books are *Move by Move: Life Lessons on and off the Chessboard* and *The Life Changing Magic of Chess*, a picture book for early readers

2024 COMMENCEMENT IN CINCINNATI GRADUATING CLASS PROFILE



Degree distribution by school:



Degree type:



46%
Percentage of graduates
from California

2,540
Furthest distance traveled
from Smith River, California

41
Number of states represented
(including U.S. territories)

Leavitt School of Health and School of Education Program

OPENING ANNOUNCEMENT

Dr. Courtney Hills McBeth
Chief Academic Officer and Provost

ANTHEM

Tadric Robinson, Lawrenceville, GA
MBA, IT Management

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Alison Bell
Regional Vice President, Central Region

GRADUATE SPEAKERS

Tiara Jones, Tigard, OR
M.S. Nursing - Leadership and Management

Daniel Baker, Orange, CA
M.Ed. Technology and Instructional Design

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

Grandmaster Maurice Ashley

CONFERRAL OF DEGREES

Dr. Courtney Hills McBeth
Chief Academic Officer and Provost

*Michael O. Leavitt School of Health
School of Education*

CLOSING REMARKS

Scott D. Pulsipher
President

School of Business and School of Technology Program

OPENING ANNOUNCEMENT

Dr. Courtney Hills McBeth

Chief Academic Officer and Provost

ANTHEM

Tadric Robinson, Lawrenceville, GA

MBA, IT Management

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Alison Bell

Regional Vice President, Central Region

GRADUATE SPEAKERS

Shelby Hepner, Nashville, TN

M.S. Learning Experience Design and Educational Technology

B.S. Business Administration – HR Management

Joshawa Stell, Minooka, IL

M.S. Cybersecurity and Information Assurance

B.S. Cybersecurity and Information Assurance

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

Grandmaster Maurice Ashley

CONFERRAL OF DEGREES

Dr. Courtney Hills McBeth

Chief Academic Officer and Provost

*School of Business
School of Technology*

CLOSING REMARKS

Scott Pulsipher

President

MEMBER GOVERNORS

The Honorable Michael O. Leavitt, Chairman Emeritus

Governor, Utah 1993–2003

Alaska

The Honorable
Michael J. Dunleavy

Indiana

The Honorable
Eric Holcomb

Oregon

The Honorable
Tina Kotek

Arizona

The Honorable
Katie Hobbs

Montana

The Honorable
Greg Gianforte

South Dakota

The Honorable
Kristi Noem

California

The Honorable
Gavin Newsom

Nebraska

The Honorable
Jim Pillen

Texas

The Honorable
Greg Abbott

Colorado

The Honorable
Jared Polis

Nevada

The Honorable
Joe Lombardo

Utah

The Honorable
Spencer Cox

Guam

The Honorable
Lou Leon Guerrero

New Mexico

The Honorable
Michelle Lujan Grisham

Washington

The Honorable
Jay R. Inslee

Hawaii

The Honorable
Josh Green, M.D.

North Dakota

The Honorable
Doug Burgum

Wyoming

The Honorable
Mark Gordon

Idaho

The Honorable
Brad Little

Oklahoma

The Honorable
Kevin Stitt

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Chairman

Joseph B. Fuller

Professor of Management Practice and Co-Director of
the Managing the Future of Work Project, Harvard
Business School

John W. Bluford III

President and Founder, Bluford
Healthcare Leadership Institute

Lenny Mendonca

Former Chief Economic and Business
Advisor, State of California

April Chou

Managing Director, Jasper Ridge
Partners

Talia Milgrom-Elcott

Founder of The Starfish Institute,
Co-Founder and Executive Director,
100Kin10

Cole Clark

Managing Director,
Higher Education, Deloitte

Eloy Oakley

CEO, College Futures Foundation

Dwana Franklin-Davis

CEO, Reboot Representation

The Honorable Jared Polis

Governor, State of Colorado

The Honorable Jim Geringer

Former Governor of Wyoming
(1995-2003)

Scott D. Pulsipher

President, Western Governors University

Kerry Healey

Former Lieutenant
Governor of Massachusetts

David Simmons

Chairman, CEO,
Simmons Media Group

The Honorable Eric Holcomb

Governor, State of Indiana

Dr. Samuel H. Smith

President Emeritus,
Washington State University

Jessie Woolley-Wilson

Former CEO and President,
DreamBox Learning



CONGRATULATIONS, NIGHT OWLS! YOU DID IT!

Welcome to our growing alumni network,
now more than 325,000 strong.

Stay connected, network with colleagues, and learn
about the many resources and benefits available to you:

Visit wgu.edu/alumni

GET SOCIAL

Share the excitement.

Use #WGUgrad to tag your commencement posts.



WGU  | ALUMNI