

Hofstra University Announces Spring 2024 Commencement Speakers

Undergraduate and Graduate Ceremonies will take place Sunday May 19, 2024

HEMPSTEAD, NEW YORK, UNITED STATES, April 29, 2024

/EINPresswire.com/ -- [Hofstra University](https://www.hofstra.edu/) is proud to announce the speakers for the undergraduate and graduate spring commencement, taking place Sunday, May 19, 2024.



- Vanessa Baird-Streeter, president and CEO of the Health & Welfare Council of Long Island, will be the speaker for the 9 a.m. undergraduate ceremony.
- Margaret Hoover, host of Firing Line with Margaret Hoover on PBS, will speak at the 1 p.m. undergraduate ceremony.
- Holden Thorp, editor-in-chief of the Science family of journals, will speak at the 5 p.m. graduate ceremony and receive an honorary degree.

More than 1,700 students are expected to receive their degrees over the three ceremonies at the David S. Mack Sports and Exhibition Complex, located on Hofstra's North Campus. [Tickets are required, and a livestream of each ceremony will be available.](#)

"Hofstra's spring commencement speakers are a diverse group of exceptional leaders whose careers and commitment to service exemplify what is possible for the graduating students," said Susan Poser, president of Hofstra University. "We look forward to celebrating with these distinguished guests, our graduates, and their loved ones."

9 a.m. Undergraduate Ceremony - Commencement Speaker: Vanessa Baird-Streeter

Vanessa Baird-Streeter is president and CEO of the Health & Welfare Council of Long Island, a network of nonprofit agencies, individuals, and corporations addressing the region's challenges

and finding solutions. She previously spent 12-plus years in Suffolk County government, most recently as deputy county executive. While her early career was in the financial industry, her background includes director of the Ministry to Catholics of African Ancestry for the Diocese of Rockville Centre, director of communications for the Town of Babylon, and executive director of communications for the Long Island Power Authority.

Baird-Streeter has a long history of community involvement and has received numerous awards for her philanthropic, business, and community-based work. She serves as the director of the Venettes Cultural Workshop Inc., a performing arts company that provides technical training and academic motivation through the arts. Through her involvement over the past 20 years, the Venettes has awarded over \$500,000 in student scholarships.

Baird-Streeter graduated from Dartmouth College with a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Education.

The following schools present degrees at the 9 a.m. ceremony:

- Hofstra College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (Kalikow School of Government, Public Policy and International Affairs; the School of Education; School of Humanities, Fine and Performing Arts; School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics)
- Hofstra Northwell School of Nursing and Physician Assistant Studies
- School of Health Professions and Human Services

1 p.m. Undergraduate Ceremony - Commencement Speaker: Margaret Hoover

Margaret Hoover is host of PBS's Firing Line with Margaret Hoover, a revival of the television series hosted by William F. Buckley Jr. for 33 years. In addition to serving as the host of the program, Hoover is a bestselling author, strategist, and political commentator. Her experience includes serving on the White House staff of President George W. Bush, on Capitol Hill, and on two presidential campaigns. In 2013, Hoover co-founded American Unity Fund, a political organization that focuses on achieving full freedom and equality for LGBTQ+ Americans by working with conservatives.

Her writing has appeared in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The New York Daily News, The Daily Beast, CNN.com, and FoxNews.com. Hoover serves on the board of overseers for Stanford University's Hoover Institution and on the board of trustees for the Hoover Presidential Foundation. She recently visited Hofstra University when PBS's Firing Line With Margaret Hoover recorded two programs at The Lawrence Herbert School of Communication.

Hoover holds a bachelor's degree from Bryn Mawr College.

The following schools present degrees at the 1 p.m. ceremony:

- Frank G. Zarb School of Business
- Lawrence Herbert School of Communication

- Fred DeMatteis School of Engineering and Applied Science

5 p.m. Graduate Ceremony - Commencement Speaker and Honorary Degree Recipient: Holden Thorp

Holden Thorp joined the Science journals in 2019, after serving as provost at Washington University, where he continues in his role as professor. He previously spent three decades at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC), serving as the 10th chancellor. He co-founded Viamet Pharmaceuticals, is a venture partner at Hatteras Venture Partners, and serves on the board of directors at PBS, the College Advising Corps, and Saint Louis University. Additionally, he serves on the scientific advisory boards of the Yale School of Medicine and the UL Research Institutes. He is co-author of two books on higher education: *The Entrepreneurial University in the Twenty-First Century* and *Our Higher Calling: Rebuilding the Partnership Between America and its Colleges and Universities*. In 2024, STAT News named Thorp to its STATUS list of the 50 top leaders in medicine in the US.

Thorp holds a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry from UNC and a PhD in Chemistry from the California Institute of Technology. He completed postdoctoral work at Yale University; received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from North Carolina Wesleyan College; and is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the National Academy of Inventors, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

“Our speakers represent leaders with diverse backgrounds”, said Donald Schaeffer, chair of the Hofstra board of trustees. “I am confident that our graduates will be inspired by the commencement messages imparted at this exciting time. Most importantly, I expect the day will be filled with dreams of the future and fond memories of Hofstra.”

The Donald and Barbara Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell will have its commencement on Monday, May 13, at 2 p.m., with David J. Skorton, MD, president and CEO of the Association of American Medical Colleges, as the commencement speaker. The Maurice A. Deane School of Law at Hofstra University will have its commencement on Monday, May 20, at 7 p.m., with Bruce Jackson delivering the commencement address, and receiving an honorary degree. Both ceremonies will be held at the David S. Mack Sports and Exhibition Complex, located on Hofstra’s North Campus.

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