

Historical Record of UW-Madison Commencement Speakers

| Date | Speaker |
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| May 2023 | Meghan Duggan '11 Olympian and former Badger hockey player |
| December 2023 | Michael Finley '14 former NBA player |
| May 2023 | Eric H. Holder Jr. former United States Attorney General |
| December 2022 | Charlie Berens, '09 comedian and journalist |
| May 2022 | Linda Thomas-Greenfield, '75 United States Ambassador to the United Nations |
| December 2021 | Manu Raju, '02 CNN's chief congressional correspondent |
| Class of 2020 Graduation Celebration held on September 18, 2021 | Pat Connaughton, NBA player for the Milwaukee Bucks |
| May 2021 | Bachelor Ceremony - André De Shields, '70 actor, singer, dancer, director and choreographer Graduate Ceremony - Dr. John Gottman, '67 and '71 mathematician, professor and author |
| December 2020 | Rose Lavelle - professional soccer player who has also played for the U.S. national team and former UW-Madison soccer player |
| May 2020 | James Patterson - author and philanthropist |
| December 2019 | Jason Gay '92 - sports and humor columnist for Wall Street Journal |
| May 2019 | J.J. Watt - former UW-Madison football player and professional football player |
| December 2018 | Commissioner Emeritus for MBL, Allan "Bud" Selig |
| May 2018 | David Muir, journalist and ABC World News Tonight anchor |
| December 2017 | Adam Horowitz and Edward Kitsis, creators of the show Once Upon a Time |
| May 2017 | Steve Levitan, co-creator and executive producer of Modern Family |
| December 2016 | Captain James A. Lovell Jr., Astronaut |
| May 2016 | Russell Wilson, former UW-Madison Quarterback, Seattle Seahawks Quarterback |
| December 2015 | Zoë Timms, Founder, Women's Education Project |
| May 2015 | Katie Couric, journalist, Yahoo global anchor |
| December 2014 | Benjamin Deutsch, vice president for corporate communications, The Coca-Cola Company |
| May 2014 | Jon Huntsman, Jr., former Governor of Utah and Presidential candidate |
| December 2013 | Donald Downs, Alexander Meiklejohn Professor of Political Science, Law, and Journalism at UW-Madison |
| May 2013 | Anders Holm, comedy writer and actor |
| December 2012 | Pat Richter, former UW-Madison athletic director |
| May 2012 | Carol Bartz, former CEO, Yahoo! and Autodesk |
| December 2011 | Jacob Wood, president and co-founder, Team Rubicon |
| May 2011 | John P. Morgridge, emeritus CEO and chairman, Cisco Systems Tashia F. Morgridge, retired educator and author |
| December 2010 | Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur (Ohio), U.S. House of Representatives |
| May 2010 | Arne Duncan, U.S. secretary of education James Kass, founder and executive director, Youth Speaks |
| December 2009 | Neil Willenson, CEO and founder, One Heartland |
| May 2009 | Allan (Bud) Selig, commissioner of Major League Baseball |
| December 2008 | Ben Schumaker, founder of the Memory Project |
| May 2008 | Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson, Wisconsin Supreme Court Kay Koplovitz, chair and CEO, Koplovitz and Co.; founder, USA Network |
| December 2007 | Scott Van Pelt, ESPN sports anchor |
| May 2007 | André De Shields, award-winning actor, director and educator |
| December 2006 | Benjamin Karlin, executive producer, The Daily Show and The Colbert Report |

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| May 2006 | Florence Chenoweth, executive director, UN Food and Agriculture Organization Odessa Piper, advocate for sustainable agriculture |
| December 2005 | John Morgridge, chairman of Cisco Systems |
| May 2005 | Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin |
| December 2004 | Gaddi Vasquez, director, United States Peace Corps |
| May 2004 | Bradley Whitford, Actor |
| December 2003 | Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson, Wisconsin Supreme Court |
| May 2003 | Jerry Zucker, movie producer |
| December 2002 | Jonathan Wolman, senior vice president, Associated Press |
| May 2002 | Louis Holland, President/CEO Holland Capital Management (alumnus) Thomas Pyle, president of Pyle Group, former CEO of Rayovac (alumnus) |
| December 2001 | Charles Trotter, chef, restaurateur, author, PBS television show |
| May 2001 | Charlene Barshefsky, US/China trade ambassador under Clinton Admin (Sat.) George Schaller, environmentalist and honorary degree recipient (Sun am) Pratima Kale, humanitarian and honorary degree recipient (Sun pm) |
| December 2000 | William Cronon, UW Madison Professor of History |
| May 2000 | Uta Hagen, Honorary degree recipient, Saturday morning and afternoon Harvey K. Littleton, Honorary degree recipient, Sunday morning Ernest Micek, Honorary degree recipient, Sunday afternoon |
| December 1999 | Shirley Abrahamson, chief justice, Wisconsin Supreme Court |
| May 1999 | Nadine Strossen, Professor of Law and New York Law School and president of the ACLU (L&S Ceremonies) Elzie Higginbottom, President, CEO East Lake Development and Management, Chicago (Sun am ceremony) Jim Berbee, President, Berbee Information Networks, Sunday PM ceremony |
| December 1998 | David Maraniss, author; writer for the Washington Post |
| May 1998 | Greta Van Susteren, CNN Legal Correspondent (L&S) Gloria Ladson Billings, UW Madison, School of Educ Prof (Educ) David Walsh, Attorney, Foley & Lardner (Business) |
| December 1997 | Doris Meissner, Commissioner, Immigration & Naturalization Service |
| May 1997 | Rita Braver, CBS News Correspondent (L&S) Oscar Boldt, Chairman of the The Boldt Group (Engr) Martin F. Stein, Chairman of Stein Optical (Pharm) |
| December 1996 | Stephen Ambrose, Visiting UW Prof History Dept, Prof U of New Orleans |
| May 1996 | Brewster Shaw, astronaut, Director, Rockwell International (L&S) Jere Fluno, Vice President, Grainger, Inc. (Business) Colin Rees, World Bank (IES) |
| December 1995 | Dean Virginia Hinshaw (Graduate School) |
| May 1995 | John Paulos, Professor of Mathematics at Temple University (L&S) Alice McPherson, Clinical Professor of Ophthalmology, Baylor College of Medicine (Medical School) Jan VerHagen, President-CEO-Director of United Dominion Ind (Engr) |
| December 1994 | No speaker |
| May 1994 | Gro Brundtland, Prime Minister of Norway (L&S) Lawrence Eagleburger, former Secretary of State (L&S) David Wilhelm, chair, Democratic National Committee (L&S) C. Eugene Allen, vice president, University of Minnesota (CALS) Stephen Marcus, chair and CEO, Marcus Corporation Theatre (Business) |
| December 1993 | Winston Brill (Grad School) |
| May 1993 | Professor Harold Scheub (L&S) Richard Sauer, 4-H (FRCS) Carl Marschke (Engr) |
| December 1992 | No speaker |
| May 1992 | Jeff Greenfield, ABC News (L&S) Joy Caulkin, Vice President and Provost, University of Calgary (Nursing) Steven Bornstein, President and CEO of ESPN (Business) |
| December 1991 | Professor Melvin Croan |
| May 1991 | John Darnton, New York Times (L&S) James Crow, Emeritus Professor (Educ) Herbert Kohler, Alumni (Engr) |
| December 1990 | Robert Kastenmeier |
| May 1990 | No speaker |

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| December 1989 | David Ward |
| May 1989 | Eleanor Holmes Norton |
| December 1988 | Bernard Cohen |
| May 1988 | No Keynote Speaker |
| December 1987 | No Keynote Speaker |
| May 1987 | No Keynote Speaker |
| December 1986 | No Keynote Speaker |
| May 1986 | No Keynote Speaker |
| December 1985 | No Keynote Speaker |
| May 1985 | No Keynote Speaker |
| December 1984 | No Keynote Speaker |
| May 1984 | No Keynote Speaker |
| December 1983 | No Keynote Speaker |
| May 1983 | Martha Peterson |
| December 1982 | No Keynote Speaker |
| May 1982 | No Keynote Speaker |
| December 1981 | No Keynote Speaker |
| May 1981 | No Keynote Speaker |
| December 1980 | No Keynote Speaker |
| May 1980 | No Keynote Speaker |
| December 1979 | No Keynote Speaker |
| May 1979 | The Honorable Walter F. Mondale, Vice President of the United States |
| December 1978 | No Keynote Speaker |
| May 1978 | No Keynote Speaker |
| December 1977 | No Keynote Speaker |
| May 1977 | No Keynote Speaker |
| December 1976 | No Keynote Speaker |
| May 1976 | No Keynote Speaker |
| December 1975 | No Keynote Speaker |
| May 1975 | No Keynote Speaker |
| December 1974 | No Keynote Speaker |
| May 1974 | No Keynote Speaker |
| December 1973 | No Keynote Speaker |
| May 1973 | No Keynote Speaker |
| January 1972 | President John C. Weaver |
| June 1971 | Fred W. Friendly, Edward R. Murrow; professor of Broadcast Journalism, Columbia University |
| January 1971 | President John C. Weaver |
| June 1970 | Stewart L. Udall, Former Secretary of Interior |
| January 1970 | President Fred Harvey Harrington |
| June 1969 | President Fred Harvey Harrington |
| January 1969 | President Fred Harvey Harrington |
| June 1968 | President Fred Harvey Harrington |
| January 1968 | President Fred Harvey Harrington |
| June 1967 | President Fred Harvey Harrington |
| January 1967 | President Fred Harvey Harrington |
| June 1966 | President Fred Harvey Harrington |
| January 1966 | President Fred Harvey Harrington |
| June 1965 | President Fred Harvey Harrington |
| January 1965 | President Fred Harvey Harrington |
| June 1964 | President Fred Harvey Harrington |

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| June 1963 | President Fred Harvey Harrington |
| June 1962 | President Conrad A. Elvehjem |
| June 1961 | President Conrad A. Elvehjem |
| June 1960 | President Conrad A. Elvehjem |
| June 1959 | President Conrad A. Elvehjem |
| June 1958 | President Edwin B. Fred |
| June 1957 | President Edwin B. Fred |
| June 1956 | President Edwin B. Fred |
| June 1955 | President Edwin B. Fred |
| June 1954 | President Edwin B. Fred |
| June 1953 | President Edwin B. Fred |
| June 1952 | President Edwin B. Fred |
| June 1951 | President Edwin B. Fred |
| June 1950 | President Edwin Broun Fred |
| June 1949 | President Edwin Broun Fred |
| June 1948 | President Edwin Broun Fred |
| June 1947 | President Edwin Broun Fred |
| June 1946 | President Edwin Broun Fred |
| June 1945 | President Edwin Broun Fred |
| June 1944 | President Clarence Addison Dykstra |
| June 1943 | President Clarence Addison Dykstra |
| June 1942 | President Clarence Addison Dykstra |
| June 1941 | President Clarence Addison Dykstra |
| June 1940 | President Clarence Addison Dykstra |
| June 1939 | President Clarence Addison Dykstra |
| June 1938 | President Clarence Addison Dykstra |
| June 1937 | President Clarence Addison Dykstra |
| June 1936 | President Glenn Frank |
| June 1935 | President Glenn Frank |
| June 1934 | President Glenn Frank |
| June 1933 | President Glenn Frank |
| June 1932 | President Glenn Frank |
| June 1931 | President Glenn Frank |
| June 1930 | President Glenn Frank |
| June 1929 | President Glenn Frank |
| June 1928 | President Glenn Frank |
| June 1927 | President Glenn Frank |
| June 1926 | President Glenn Frank |
| June 1925 | President Edward A. Birge |
| June 1924 | President Edward A. Birge |
| June 1923 | President Edward A. Birge |
| June 1922 | President Edward A. Birge |
| June 1921 | President Edward A. Birge |
| June 1920 | President Edward A. Birge |
| June 1919 | President Edward A. Birge |
| June 1918 | President Charles R. Van Hise |
| June 1917 | President Charles R. Van Hise |
| June 1916 | President Charles R. Van Hise |
| June 1915 | President Charles R. Van Hise |
| June 1914 | President Charles R. Van Hise |

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| June 1913 | President Charles R. Van Hise |
| June 1912 | President Charles R. Van Hise |
| June 1911 | President Charles R. Van Hise |
| June 1910 | President Charles R. Van Hise |
| June 1909 | President Charles R. Van Hise |
| June 1908 | President Charles R. Van Hise |
| June 1907 | President Charles R. Van Hise |
| June 1906 | President Charles R. Van Hise |
| June 1905 | President Charles R. Van Hise |
| June 1904 | Dr. Thomas C. Chamberlin (Former President of the University), Dr. William Peterson (Principal of McGill University), President Charles R. Van Hise |
| June 1903 | Acting President Edward A. Birge |
| June 1902 | Acting President Edward A. Birge |
| June 1901 | Acting President Edward A. Birge |
| June 1900 | President Charles Kendall Adams |
| June 1899 | President Charles Kendall Adams |
| June 1898 | President Charles Kendall Adams |
| June 1897 | President Charles Kendall Adams |
| June 1896 | President Charles Kendall Adams |
| June 1895 | President Charles Kendall Adams |
| June 1894 | President Charles Kendall Adams |
| June 1893 | President Cyrus Northrop, LL. D., University of Minnesota |
| June 1892 | Major J. W. Powell, Director of U.S. Geological Survey |
| June 1891 | Daniel C. Gilman, President of John Hopkins University |
| June 1890 | E.B. Andrews, President of Brown University |
| June 1889 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1888 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1887 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1886 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1885 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1884 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1883 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1882 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1881 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1880 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1879 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1878 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1877 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1876 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1875 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1874 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1873 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1872 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1871 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1870 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1869 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1868 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1867 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1866 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1865 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1864 | No Keynote Speaker |

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| June 1862 | No Keynote Speaker |
| June 1861 | No Keynote Speaker |
| July 1860 | No Keynote Speaker |
| July 1859 | No Keynote Speaker |
| July 1858 | No Keynote Speaker |
| July 1857 | "By the chancellor" |
| July 1856 | "By the chancellor" |