



# St. George's University

**SCHOOL OF MEDICINE**

Grenada, West Indies

## WHITE COAT CEREMONY

SATURDAY, MAY 30, 2026

Patrick F. Adams Hall  
Chancellor Charles Modica Campus, Grenada

# PROGRAM

- Master of Ceremonies..... **Kazzara Raeburn, MD '08, MSc '20, MPH '26**  
Associate Dean, Curriculum, Basic Sciences,  
and Co-Chair, Anatomical Sciences,  
St. George's University
- Remarks..... **Mark Clunes, PhD, FRSB, MPH '26**  
Provost and Senior Associate Dean of Basic Sciences,  
St. George's University
- Remarks..... **Marios Loukas, MD, PhD, Dr. h.c., MPH '26**  
President and Dean, School of Medicine,  
St. George's University
- Remarks..... **Charles R. Modica, JD**  
Chancellor, St. George's University
- Introduction of Keynote Speaker..... **Kazzara Raeburn, MD '08, MSc '20, MPH '26**  
Associate Dean, Curriculum, Basic Sciences,  
and Co-Chair, Anatomical Sciences,  
St. George's University
- Keynote Address ..... **Tyhiesia Donald, MD**  
Medical Director, Grenada General Hospital
- Presentation of White Coats ..... **Dr. Malcolm Antoine Jr.,  
Dr. Catherina Billey,  
Dr. Myanna Charles,  
Dr. Tiffany Clementson,  
Dr. Deon Forrester,  
Dr. Simone Pierre,  
Dr. Michon Sukhoo-Pertab,  
Dr. Gabrielle Walcott-Bedeau**
- Professional Commitment ..... **Anna Cyrus-Murden, MD '05, MPH**  
Assistant Dean, Simulation and Co-Chair, Clinical Skills,  
St. George's University
- Recessional

# KEYNOTE SPEAKER

TYHIESIA DONALD, MD



Dr. Tyhiesia Donald is the medical director and consultant pediatrician at St. George's General Hospital, where she has dedicated nearly two decades to advancing child health and strengthening healthcare delivery in Grenada. She trained at the Higher Institute of Medical Sciences in Villa Clara, Cuba, where she developed a strong foundation in pediatrics and a commitment to compassionate, patient-centered care.

Since joining Grenada's public health service in 2006, Dr. Donald has advanced through a range of leadership roles, serving as head of the Pediatric Department before being appointed medical director in 2019. In this capacity, she provides strategic oversight of hospital operations, with emphasis on quality improvement, patient safety, and clinical excellence. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she played a critical leadership role in coordinating clinical response efforts, guiding surge planning, and contributing to national decision-making as a member of the National COVID-19 Advisory Committee. She also serves as the focal point for the Mount Sinai International Quality Improvement Project at St. George's General Hospital.

Dr. Donald has contributed extensively to national health initiatives through her service on key boards and committees, including the Child Protection Authority, and through her work in immunization, disease surveillance, eHealth, and child protection. She continues to champion programs that improve maternal and child health, including newborn screening and national immunization efforts.

A dedicated educator and mentor, Dr. Donald worked with St. George's University as a pediatric clerkship director, instructor, and clinical preceptor, helping to train and inspire the next generation of physicians. Her academic contributions include peer-reviewed publications in pediatrics and genetics, with a focus on improving care in underserved and resource-limited settings.

Fluent in Spanish and shaped by a multicultural medical background, Dr. Donald brings a global perspective to local healthcare delivery. Her career reflects a sustained commitment to clinical excellence, education, and health system strengthening in service of the communities she serves.

# MASTER OF CEREMONIES

KAZZARA RAEBURN, MD '08, MSC '20, MPH '26



Dr. Kazzara Raeburn is assistant professor and co-chair of the Department of Anatomical Sciences at St. George's University School of Medicine, where she also serves as associate dean for curriculum in basic sciences and chair of the Basic Sciences Curriculum Subcommittee. In these roles, she leads initiatives to strengthen curriculum design, assessment systems, and the integration of communication skills and professionalism across the medical program.

Dr. Raeburn joined SGU's faculty in 2009 and has held progressive leadership roles, including becoming the youngest course director of the integrated Term 1 course following the School's transition to a systems-based curriculum in 2016. She played a key role in designing and implementing this curriculum and introduced innovations that enhanced the integration of clinical concepts into the basic sciences, including the expansion of ultrasound, simulation-based learning, integrated small groups, and clinical case-based teaching.

An accomplished educator and scholar, Dr. Raeburn has received multiple teaching awards and has pursued advanced training in health professions education through the Harvard Macy Institute. She is an active member of the American Association for Anatomy and the American Association of Clinical Anatomists, contributing to national leadership and committee work. Her research and academic interests focus on clinical anatomy, ultrasound integration in medical education, and curriculum development, with a commitment to preparing future physicians for effective practice in diverse, global settings.

A proud SGU alumna, Dr. Raeburn earned her Doctor of Medicine, graduating cum laude in 2008, and later completed a Master of Science in anatomy, with research focused on the clinical application of ultrasound. She also holds a Master of Public Health, further strengthening her expertise in health systems, population health, and medical education.

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND DEAN, SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

MARIOS LOUKAS, MD, PHD, DR. H.C.

Today bears reflecting on a few of the principles of the oath you will affirm upon graduation from this institution. At the heart of that oath is a resolve to treat the sick to the best of your ability, to preserve patient privacy, and to safeguard life. It also calls to mind a responsibility to share your wisdom with others. Recognize that in entering the field of medicine you join a community, wherein the team is as pivotal to success as individual effort. To this end, you must strive for excellence in your pursuit of knowledge, for you can only give your best when you fulfill your potential.

As you don these white physician coats, you pledge an oath of professionalism and service. While these values are under attack, they are a necessary requirement in medical practice. Professionalism is a commitment to integrity, altruism, competence, and ethics in the service of others.

A physician must constantly balance the needs of his patients and society against the available resources and his own interests. We must endeavor to honor the sacred trust and privilege that society places in medical professionals, cognizant that the standard is an ideal that we must continuously aim to achieve.

# MESSAGE FROM THE CHANCELLOR

CHARLES R. MODICA, JD, DCL (HONORARY)

I welcome all of you to St. George's University School of Medicine. You have chosen a great and noble career. This White Coat Ceremony symbolizes your entry into the medical profession, a milestone in your life that carries with it a profound obligation of service to others.

As you begin your studies for this challenging career, you must weigh opportunity against responsibility. St. George's University will equip you with all the right tools for the job, but how much you take away with you will depend on how you approach the experience and how much effort you invest in it. I wish you every success.

# A MESSAGE FROM YOUR FACULTY

## THE JOURNEY OF A PHYSICIAN: A COMMITMENT TO COMPASSION AND EXCELLENCE

As you embark on the remarkable journey of becoming a physician, it's crucial to embrace the qualities that will guide you both personally and professionally. Kindness, gratitude, focus, laughter, optimism, compassion, honesty, presence, humility, curiosity, and attentive listening are not just virtues; they are essential tools that will shape your interactions with patients and colleagues, ensuring you provide the best care possible.

"Reflecting on my own journey, I entered medical school 61 years ago as an M1. Back then, there was no formal White Coat Ceremony, but I proudly wore my white coat from day one. This coat followed me through basic science and clinical years, internship, residency, and into practice. At age 82, I still put on my white coat every day and go to the hospital or go into the classroom with the same enthusiasm I had 61 years ago. The white coat is more than a garment; it symbolizes the ethical and professional standards we must uphold."

- *Dr. Anthony N. Dardano, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology*

"Medicine is a lifelong commitment to serve. The road is long and hard, and the goal sometimes seems challenging to reach. Clear your mind and heart of preconceptions and face your future open to the unexpected. Medicine requires more than knowledge; it requires you to welcome and embrace different views, cultures, and idiosyncrasies. Your experience here will provide the knowledge and opportunity to reinvent yourself. Remember, if you need help along the way, we are here for you."

- *Dr. Maria Ramos Nino, Department of Pharmacology, Microbiology, and Immunology*

"Clearly defining your short-term and long-term goals will guide your actions and decisions. Don't hesitate to ask for help, whether for academic assistance or emotional support. Seeking help is a sign of strength in your professional community. Learn to prioritize and manage your time effectively. Balance study, rest, and play to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Challenges and setbacks are part of the journey. Stay persistent and resilient, and you will overcome obstacles and achieve your goals."

- *Dr. Charlotte Taylor-Drago, Department of Clinical Skills*

"Strive for self-improvement through continuous learning in the ever-evolving field of medicine. Foster meaningful connections with your peers and professionals, as collaboration leads to remarkable progress. Embrace each day as a new opportunity to learn, grow, and make a difference in the lives of your patients."

- *Dr. Stephen Onigbinde, Department of Gross Anatomy and Histology*

"While the road may seem rocky at times, embrace each day as a new opportunity to learn, grow, and make a difference in the lives of your patients. Remember that empathy and compassion are as vital as your medical expertise. Stay curious, stay humble, and let your dedication to healing guide you through every challenge and success you face."

- *Dr. Krystal Rampersad, Department of Clinical Skills*

# A MESSAGE FROM YOUR FACULTY

## THE JOURNEY OF A PHYSICIAN: A COMMITMENT TO COMPASSION AND EXCELLENCE

“Bring your whole self along on this journey. It takes your entire authentic self and all your experiences to connect with others. Show compassion even in difficult situations. Speak with kindness, even when frustrated. Offer hope, even when physically tired and emotionally drained. Fight for justice in healthcare, even when uncomfortable. Remember, it is a privilege to see, hear, and do what we do. These words may sound daunting, but they are vital.”

- *Dr. Toni Johnson-Liggins, Associate Dean Clinical Studies*

“This is an exciting time! Savor the moment. When you encounter hard patches in residency or treating patients, remember that your connections with them make a difference. I find that I am my best self when I do things that invigorate my well-being. For me, it’s a bike ride, yoga, or dinner and a movie with family. I recommend you take care of yourself so you can better take care of your patients.”

- *Dr. Christine Fernandez, Department of Emergency Medicine*

“Remember this moment as you start your journey in medicine. Today, you will take an oath to serve your patients, a commitment that will stay with you throughout your career and beyond. Learn from everyone involved in your medical education. Be kind to others and treat them with respect. Your faculty are here to support you at every step of your journey. Take care of your patients as you would your own family and friends, as this will connect you to your purpose indefinitely. The education you receive here will equip you to fulfill that purpose successfully. Enjoy the ride and let your passion for medicine guide you through every challenge and success.”

- *Dr. Melissa Wallach, Department of Pediatrics*

**Being a physician is a journey, not a destination. Enjoy the ride!**

# HONOR CODE

## ST. GEORGE'S UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

As a member of the student body of St. George's University School of Medicine, an institution of medical education dedicated to a high standard of ethics and academic achievement, and recognizing that it is the duty of the University community to nurture responsible, competent, and safe physicians who exhibit professional maturity and sound moral character, I agree:

- To adhere to the University policy of maintaining a high standard of honor and academic integrity;
- To uphold these ideals by refraining from cheating, plagiarism, lying, and theft; and,
- To accept the responsibility of reporting such wrong doing upon witness.

It is understood that any breach of this Code necessitates disciplinary action, subject to the discretion of University officials. Once signed, acquiescence to this Code is in effect.

# GOLD HUMANISM HONOR SOCIETY

Every academic year, a group of students is inducted into St. George's University School of Medicine Chapter of the Gold Humanism Honor Society (GHHS). Inductees are nominated by their peers and selected on the basis of their humanistic qualities and community service. Our GHHS strives to promote humanism and high ethical standards in medicine and medical education. The White Coat Ceremony Committee extends congratulations to our most recent inductees.

## INDUCTEES

David Abed	Daniel Mendoza
Irina Ahn	Summer Ruth Miller-Walfish
Ali Gamal Al-Amrany	Erica Leigh North
Amanda Natalie Allan	Erick Ochieng
Angel Miguel Bas Acevedo	Abibat Oshiobugie-Odeyemi
Vedica Bhasin	Akshar Bhaskar Patel
Terrence M Blackman	Jainika J Patel
Desiree Jade Boisson	Serena Reshma Persaud
Valon Camaj	Tereque Sidney Anthony Raeburn
Harminder Kaur Chahal	Justin M Sacks
Rana Elsayed	Julian Sadowski
Nicole Patricia Giorlando	Mohammed Salih Thiab
Lady Laura Gonzalez Perez	Megha Sarada
David Hernandez	Jessica Jace Schumaker
Brooke E Hildebrand	Savannah Lynn Seeger-Richardson
Adam Michael Jank	Allison Katherine Shay
Caitlyn Brenna Keenan	Navaz Darius Shroff
Julia Ali Kobeissi	Paula Staroshinsky
Sylvia Kulagowski Kolankiewicz	Zoya Syed
Amanda Kwong	Emily L Tang
Shahzeb Leghari	Morgan Ulczak
Joshua Lewis	Jennifer Caitlyn Wallace
Jay Austin Li	Tiffany Bik-kay Wut
Lygia Anselmo Machado	Mehdi Zarrei

# PROFESSIONAL COMMITMENT

Today is the beginning of my medical education and training as physician. I acknowledge my responsibility to continue the pursuit of knowledge and understanding while recognizing the limits of my abilities and seeking assistance when necessary.

I am entering training for a noble profession in which my interest must always be subservient to those who may seek my assistance. I must be ever conscious of the value of my fellow healthcare professionals and treat them with respect at all times. My classmates at St. George's University are now my colleagues and I owe to them the same support and encouragement to achieve their goals as I hope to receive from them. I will work alongside my colleagues and professors with tolerance, compassion, honesty, and cultural humility. I will treat all members of the St George's University community and its visitors with equity, regardless of rank, as I will do with my future patients.

I acknowledge my obligation to adhere to the University Honor Code and to conduct myself with integrity and in an ethical manner at all times henceforth. Taking full responsibility for my choices and actions, I shall do all within my power to show in myself an example of all that is honorable and good throughout my medical career. It is a privilege to have been given the opportunity to become a physician. May I be ever conscious of that privilege and never abuse it.

Written by the Student Ethics Task Force  
and Alexander P. Ross, MS, FRCS

Revised by the Office of Multicultural Affairs  
with input from SOM faculty and students

# THE WHITE COAT CEREMONY

More than 25 years since its inception at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University in 1993, the White Coat Ceremony has become an important ritual symbolizing a student's induction into the medical profession. St. George's University School of Medicine embraced the White Coat Ceremony in 1996.

Affirming this oath of commitment to the medical profession at the beginning of their studies inducts our MD students into the medical profession—and its highest ethical and professional standards—from the very beginning of their career.

The ceremony is significant not just to each incoming class, but for all who attend including: St. George's University faculty; its staff; students' families and friends; and the White Coat Ceremony keynote speakers who inspire first-term students with heartfelt words of wisdom and personal reflections. It is their spoken contributions that we treasure, and are honored to share with past, present, and future generations of St. George's University students.

“Tonight is a transition in life—an opening, a passage, and a precious opportunity to reassert what we share, what we deeply believe beyond subspecialty or gender or age—that the chains of pain and suffering can and will be broken, that the world can change one person, one situation, one diagnosis, one dignity-affirming moment, one life-affirming moment at a time.”

Jonathan M. Mann, MD, MPH  
St. George's University White Coat Ceremony  
January 1998

“Time, sympathy, and understanding must be lavishly dispensed, but the reward is to be found in that personal bond which forms the greatest satisfaction of the practice of medicine.

One of the essential qualities of the clinician is the interest in humanity, for the secret of care of the patient is caring for the patient.”

Francis W. Peabody

*From a lecture to Harvard medical students in 1925  
Accessed from the American College of Physicians, 2007*