



APRIL 18, 2024

BARON-FORNESS LIBRARY

6 PM RECEPTION

7 PM AWARDS PRESENTATION

WELCOME

INTRODUCTION OF AWARDS

PRESENTATION OF 2024 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI

CLOSING



# *Celebrating*

## 2024 EDINBORO DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI

*The Distinguished Alumni Awards are presented annually to Edinboro alumni who have distinguished themselves through professional achievements, contributions to society and support of the university.*



### **James H. Wright '95**

#### *Criminal Justice*

James Wright retired in 2023 as director of the Erie District for the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole. Wright received honorable discharge from the U.S. Navy following deployments during Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm. He began his 30-year career in state parole and corrections as a parole agent assigned to rural, inner city and intensive drug unit caseloads. In 2001, he became a corrections counselor and later director of the Erie Community Corrections Center. While at Erie CCC, he was named employee of the year by the Department of Corrections for receiving two consecutive 100% ratings on American Correctional Association audits. Wright returned to PBPP as a parole supervisor in 2011. He was promoted to district director in 2019 and provided critical leadership throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Wright has served as a member of the Department of Criminal Justice Advisory Board and assisted students with internships and mock interviews.



**Charles Herring Jr. '90**  
*Speech Communication*

Charles Herring Jr., Ed.D., is director of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging at South Fayette Township School District. In 2019, Herring co-founded SHOUT (Social Handprints Overcoming Unjust Treatment), a student-led organization that helps Western Pennsylvania school districts create and maintain safe, culturally responsive spaces for all. He later initiated Project OTIS (Operation Teacher (of Color) Irrigation System), a partnership with Howard University aimed at recruiting educators of color. In 2021, Herring was named an Educator of the Year by the State of Black Learning and presented the Innovative School Leader Award by the Pennsylvania School Board Association. He was selected by the American Council on Germany to participate in a Transatlantic dialogue focused on policies that promote a culturally affirming environment in Germany and asked to serve as a co-lead for the Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (EIB) Task Force for Pennsylvania.



**Joseph P. Pfadt '88, '93, M '09**  
*Speech Communication*  
*Secondary Education Social Studies*  
*Educational Leadership*

Major (Ret.) Joseph Pfadt, Ph.D., is executive director and CEO of the Oliver Hazard Perry Shipyard, which seeks to bring a Perry Class Frigate to Erie's waterfront. Pfadt retired from the military in 2014 after 30 years of service to the U.S. Army National Guard and a deployment to Kosovo in 2003-2004. He taught high school social studies at Harbor Creek High School from 1992 until his retirement in 2019. Pfadt founded Warriors to Washington in 2013 to honor veterans from the Erie region who were deployed and served in the U.S. Armed Forces as a result of the attack on 9/11. He co-chaired the committee to bring the Vietnam Wall That Heals to Erie and has received several commendation medals, including the Meritorious Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, Pennsylvania Commendation Medal, National Defense Ribbon with Two Bronze Stars and Military +++Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal.



**Lorren R. Lucas '05**  
*Elementary and Special Education*

Lorren Lucas teaches grades 6-12 at South Carolina Connections Academy. Prior to SCCA, Lucas was chairperson of the Special Education Department and a K-5 teacher at Williams Memorial Elementary School in Saint George, S.C., where she founded the Unified Tiger Champion Special Olympics Program. The program, which grew to include a weeklong celebration for students of all ability levels, resulted in Williams Memorial being named a National Banner school, an ESPN honor school and a Hasbro award winner. Lucas was recognized as one of the Top 100 Visionaries in Education in 2021 by the Global Forum for Education and Learning. She was named the 2022-2023 District 4 Teacher of the Year and the Williams Memorial Elementary School Teacher of the Year. Lucas was also honored among the Girl Scouts of Eastern South Carolina Women of Distinction Class of 2022 for her contributions as a mentor and leader.

