

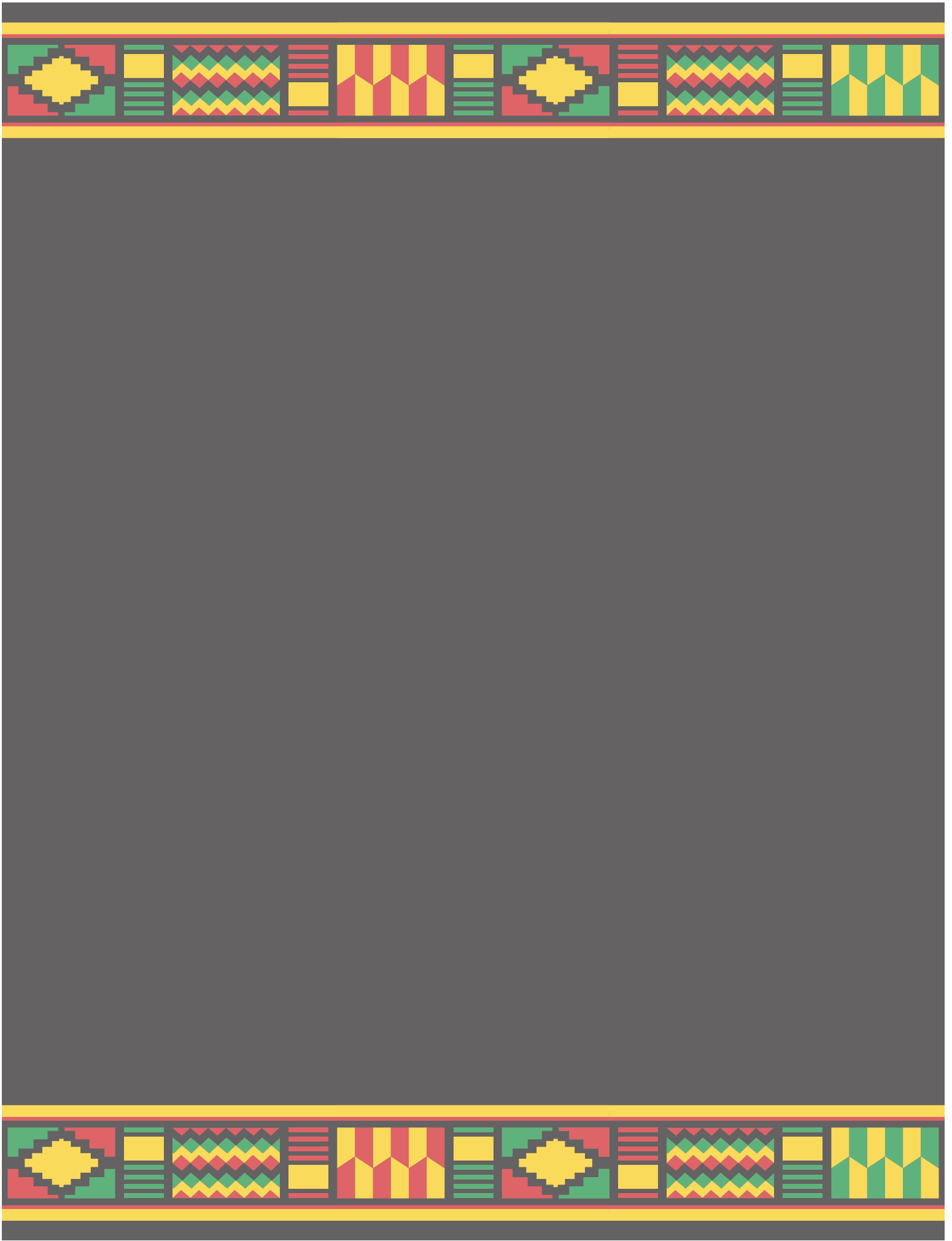


WILLIAM S.  
**PITTMAN**  
GRADUATION CEREMONY

WEDNESDAY, MAY 17, 2023 | 6 P.M. ET

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## WILLIAM S. PITTMAN

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William Sidney Pittman was the first African American graduate from what was then called the Drexel Institute of Art, Science and Industry. Graduating with a diploma in architectural drawing in 1900, Pittman left behind a legacy not just on Drexel's campus but also for the entire nation.

Pittman, the son of an enslaved father, graduated in 1897 from the Tuskegee Institute, the country's preeminent historically Black architectural school. Booker T. Washington, the institute's principal, arranged for Tuskegee to financially support three years of studies for Pittman at the newly created Drexel Institute of Art, Science and Industry if he paid off his debt by teaching at the Tuskegee. Once at Drexel, Pittman worked with President James A. MacAlister and Arthur Truscott, architecture professor and department head, to finish his five-year program in three years through "a very different but more extraordinary and a more elaborate course than usual," as he wrote to Washington. Pittman earned top grades in architectural design, mechanical drawing, freehand drawing, water coloring, and history at Drexel. He then graduated in 1900, celebrated as one of the "honored" students of the class by MacAlister. Pittman returned to the Tuskegee Institute as head of the department of architectural drawing. He oversaw all campus construction, including the still-standing following campus buildings — Rockefeller Hall and Carnegie Library. Pittman rose to national prominence as a high-profile African American architect and the first to obtain a federal commission.

Ultimately, Pittman designed over 50 buildings across the country, many of which were created for Black communities and were presented as examples for other African American architects to aspire to. Several buildings — including his family home and community buildings — are state or National Historical Landmarks.

Each year since 2016, in William S. Pittman's honor, Drexel University recognizes all graduates of the African diaspora whose legacy and contributions to their respective fields have paved the way for success of others in their educational, personal, and professional endeavors with our William S. Pittman Graduation Ceremony. It is our honor and privilege to name our ceremony after Mr. Pittman.

# THE KENTE CLOTH STOLE

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Originating in what is today known as Ghana, West Africa — the word “kente” translates to “handwoven cloth” in the native Twi language. Known for its rich, bold colors, kente cloth grew in popularity in the 12th century. Believed to be originally commissioned as a cloth spun for royal ritual attire, the kente cloth continues to be used as a ceremonial garment that carries a deep, personal significance for the wearer.

Today, wearing the garment as an academic stole at graduation is a moment of pride and carries both historic and personal significance for graduates at schools all around the world. One of the hallmarks of Drexel’s William S. Pittman ceremony is the donning of the Drexel kente cloth stole before the main commencement event by someone important to the graduate. The donning of the Drexel kente stole represents the excellence and contributions of students of the African diaspora at Drexel University.



# LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING

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In 1900, “Lift Every Voice and Sing” was written and composed by the Johnson brothers — James Weldon Johnson and John Rosamond Johnson. These talented artists and influential civil rights activists firmly believed that artistic and cultural excellence was a key to Black advancement in America. Since 1919, this powerful hymn has been recognized as the Black National Anthem.

*Lift every voice and sing,  
‘Til earth and heaven ring,  
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;  
Let our rejoicing rise  
High as the list’ning skies,  
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.  
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,  
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;  
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,  
Let us march on ‘til victory is won.*

*Stony the road we trod,  
Bitter the chastening rod,  
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;  
Yet with a steady beat,  
Have not our weary feet  
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?  
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,  
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,  
Out from the gloomy past,  
‘Til now we stand at last  
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.*

*God of our weary years,  
God of our silent tears,  
Thou who has brought us thus far on the way;  
Thou who has by Thy might  
Led us into the light,  
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.  
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,  
Lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;  
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,  
May we forever stand,  
True to our God,  
True to our native land.*



# MOST OUTSTANDING STUDENT AWARDS

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The Stephen R. Cox and Jasmine Y. Wright Awards recognize one undergraduate and one graduate student who have excelled academically and either overcome tremendous odds to be successful or have consistently made contributions that benefit others. Any Drexel community member can nominate any deserving student. Decisions are based on the recipients' service, leadership, or other distinctive efforts made to improve the campus or local, national, or international community.



## THE MR. STEPHEN R. COX MOST OUTSTANDING UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT AWARD

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Mr. Stephen R. Cox graduated from Drexel University in 1974 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Physics and Atmospheric Sciences and a Master of Science degree in Biophysics and Biomedical Engineering in 1976. He is the founder and developer of the Greater Philadelphia Region Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (Philadelphia AMP) funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF). Mr. Cox has helped the Alliance to substantially increase its capacity to recruit, develop, and support underrepresented minority STEM graduate students with full tuition and stipend assistance. With over 15 years of service, Mr. Cox has personally mentored Drexel students as undergraduates through their doctoral completion. Currently, he serves as the organization advisor for the Drexel Black Graduate Student Union, is a member of the Center for Black Culture advisory board, and was recognized with an Outstanding Staff Award for his dedication.



## THE MS. JASMINE Y. WRIGHT MOST OUTSTANDING GRADUATE STUDENT AWARD

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Ms. Jasmine Y. Wright graduated from The Pennsylvania State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Bio Behavioral Health in 2011. Jasmine traveled to Ghana, The Gambia, and Senegal to gain maternal and child health knowledge in an effort to increase her overall understanding of health care and treatment from a global perspective. In 2015, she completed her Master of Public Health degree in Environmental and Occupational Health at Drexel University's School of Public Health. A charismatic and caring friend who was passionate about social justice issues plaguing minority communities, Jasmine was taken from us only a few short weeks after graduation in 2015. While her physical presence is sorely missed, her contributions to the world will live on through her published research and her family and friends.



# ORDER OF CEREMONY

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## PROCESSIONAL

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Master Jay Drummers

## "LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING"

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Drexel University Gospel Choir

## WELCOME

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Subir Sahu, PhD  
Senior Vice President for Student Success

## DONNING OF THE KENTE

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*Names read by:*

Patience Ajoff-Foster, PhD  
Assistant Vice President for Inclusive Culture and Belonging

Evelyn Thimba  
Senior Vice President for Enrollment Management

*Stoles presented by:*

Subir Sahu, PhD  
Senior Vice President for Student Success

Rae Coleman, MS  
Assistant Director for the Center for Black Culture

## MOST OUTSTANDING STUDENT AWARDS

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*Presented by:*

Jenna Washington, BA Global Studies '24  
Vice President of the Black Student Union

Alex Ashley, PhD Chemical and Biological Engineering '27

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER

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Ebony White, PhD, LPC, NCC, ACS  
Assistant Clinical Professor, Counseling & Family Therapy Department

## ALUMNI WELCOME

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Janeile Johnson, BS '10, MS '13



## KEYNOTE SPEAKER

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Ebony White, PhD, LPC, NCC, ACS

Assistant Clinical Professor, Counseling & Family Therapy Department

Ebony White, PhD is a counselor, advocate, activist, speaker, trainer, researcher, and mental health expert. She has devoted her career to supporting under-resourced, under-served, culturally rich, and immensely capable individuals, families, and communities. Growing up in the city of Trenton, NJ and being raised by a village directly influenced her sense

of community, pride, and purpose. Her varied personal experiences, extensive education, and expertise in research and practice have uniquely positioned her to counsel, teach, and train in ways that lead to transformation.

Dr. Ebony's impact reaches across the globe. As an expert in her field, she has been quoted in numerous news outlets, including *Newsweek*, *Medium*, the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *PopSugar*, and *The New York Times*. She has been a repeated guest expert on CBS News in Philadelphia and was featured on TVC News Nigeria. Furthermore, she has done trauma work in Croix des Bouquets, Haiti; provided training to leaders in the healthcare system in Gombe State, Nigeria; and created a mental health course for students in Tarkwa, Ghana.

She has published several articles in peer-reviewed journals and appears in the advocacy focused video from Alexander Street Press titled, "Helping Counselors and Psychologists as Advocates and Activists: Strength, Solidarity, Strategy and Sustainability." Dr. Ebony also gave a TEDx talk, titled "You Don't Get to Name Me." In 2007, Dr. Ebony received the Woman of the Year award from the Mercer County Commission on Women. She also received the Community Service Award from the NJ State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs and the Carver Youth and Family Center in 2018. In 2021, she was awarded the Dr. Judy Lewis Counselor for Social Justice award from the American Counseling Association and received the award for Outstanding Service and Advocacy to the Profession of Counseling from the North Atlantic Region of the American Counseling Association.

Currently, Dr. Ebony is the President of Counselors for Social Justice, a national organization, and was appointed to the ACA Anti-Racism Commission. She is community focused and values relationships above all else. More important than her educational achievements and awards are her identities as a daughter, granddaughter, sister, cousin, friend, godmother, and niece. She lives by Ubuntu, "I am because we are, and because we are, I am."

# WILLIAM S. PITTMAN GRADUATION CEREMONY CLASS OF 2023

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Anthony Addofoly	Nafissa Bryan	Kaelah Grant
Imisioluwa Ademoyo	Lizajane Emanuella Bunyan	Janyah Green
Mobolawa Adio	Tynisha Carter	Dawn T. Gresham
Asia Ahmad	Rasheem Clark	Ewura Adjoa Gwira
Yaseen Ahmid	E'Lea Cooper Grant	Mekkah Harris
Oluwapamilerin Akinjide	Donnie Crosby II	Ziad Hatab
Madelaine Akinyemi	Flor Cruz-Morillo	Kira Hudson
Zakheyah Allen	Jordan Daniels	Remiah Hughes
Michelle Ampofo	Asha Davis	Chiamaka Ibe
Michelle Anderson	Simone Denny	Jordan Jackson
Siani Anderson	Sona Diallo	Tameka Jackson-Leung
Christian Ankrah	Blessing Dixon	Judymae Jolibois
Kwame Anokurang-Budu	Kendra Denise Dobson	Amya Jones
Stephen Antwi	Tenéyah Dorsey	Malcolm Jones
Akua Afriyie Asibey	Okwei Dowuona	Shanelle Jones
Drexlar Nikei Attram	Gwendolyn Drayton-Forbes	Adella Knuckles
Alisha Augustin	Shelby Dupee	Lemuel Kye Nyarko
Bella Bach	Shanice Edwards	Ebonish Lamar
Alana Backstrom	Chidinma Ekeabu	Isaac Lamptey
Olayinka Badmus	Autumn Ellis	Sope Lartey
Amani Barnett	Zaria Emery	Aaron Loftman
Illyana Bass	Oroghene Emudainohwo	Sloan Longo
Summer Beasley	Daniel Erbynn	Leona Mack
Carter Benoit-Myer	Renaldo Facey	Chidera Madu
Brooke Bettis	Saraa Fadl	Courtney Malden
Joshua Bobb	Ayomide Falae	Soukayna Mardas
Mikayah Booker	Oluwatosin Victoria Famakinwa	Chelsea Martin
Monique Boskett	Ammonie Flamer	Rediet Masresha
Sammy Bossman	Halie Fox	Marissa Massey
Djenne Boutrin	Denise Freeman-Twiggs	Tracey McCafferty
Gabrielle Brown	Alexis Gentry	Joshua McCants
Shermeka Brown-Ancrum	Joshua Gonzalez	Nia McCune



# WILLIAM S. PITTMAN GRADUATION CEREMONY CLASS OF 2023

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Larissa McFall	Damani Reaves	Shanique Williams
Fatimah Christina Miah	Tykesha Reed	Shaylah Williams
Muhammad	Najeda Regis	Brittney Wilson
Anaya Mitchell	Xavier Rosario	Jade Winn-McNeil
Cozette Mitchell	Sally Sagnia	Danielle Wooten
Sophia Momah	Hikma Salhe	Colby Young-Lee
Shayne Moore	Kiara Santos	
Jonathan Etienne Morency	Mouhamadou Sao	
Tiffany Mwakisha	Alexcia Scott	
Deiriai Myers	Danielle Shank	
Jaara Ndaw	Linford Smith	
Jovita Ngaugwu	Maleah Spicer	
Katelyn Odoms	Chelsea Spratley	
Nneso Offor	Aniya Stevenson	
Makuachukwu Maryann Okolo	Gina Sturdivant	
Ogheneteme Okotete	Tapehlyn Tapeh	
Patricia Olabanji	Alwyn Taylor	
Tajiana Oladapo	Erika Taylor	
Sandra Olaniyi	Morgan Thomas	
Deja Oliver	Josiane Tsobgny	
Omololu Omoteso	Jaya Tucker	
Chike Onuchukwu	Amara Ude	
Brian Osafo-Mensah	Obi Udeze	
Yasmin Osman	Jade Umstead	
Jade Owens	Adrienne Walker	
Noah Peddy	Ivie Warner	
Mia Peña	Lucious Washington	
Gabriella Perry	Tyrone Waters	
Quiana Peterson	Victoria Watson	
Evan Michael Pew	Timothy Weal	
Darius Phillips	Ta'Tyana Whitehead	
Jared Quampah	Linda Williams	



