



WESTERN GOVERNORS UNIVERSITY®

Commencement Ceremony

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2020

DALLAS, TEXAS



Our Mission

The principal mission of Western Governors University is to improve quality and expand access to post-secondary education opportunities by providing a means for individuals to learn independent of time or place and to earn competency-based degrees and other credentials that are credible to both academic institutions and employers.

Our Promise

We help our students achieve their dreams for a degree and career success by providing a personal, flexible, and affordable education based on real-world competencies.

wgu.edu

Message from the President



Dear Graduates,

On behalf of all of us at WGU, I want to congratulate you and welcome you to our commencement celebration. We recognize and respect the hard work and sacrifices you have made to complete your degree, and today is your day to celebrate this important milestone in your life.

We share your excitement and pride in this achievement—one that has the potential to make a real difference for you, your family, and even future generations. As you join the ranks of the more than 170,000 WGU graduates, we hope you will stay in touch through the Alumni Network.

Again, thank you for coming today. We are so grateful for the opportunity to share this day with you and your loved ones. Congratulations!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott D. Pulsipher". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Scott D. Pulsipher, President
Western Governors University

Commencement Speaker



Olga E. Custodio

*America's First Latina Fighter Pilot,
STEM Advocate*

The first Latina to complete U.S. Air Force Undergraduate Pilot Training and become a pilot, Olga E. Custodio points to three principles that have helped her become successful in a profession dominated by men: overcoming self-doubt, staying open to possibilities, and seeing herself as an equal.

The path to her dream, however, has not been a walk in the park. While studying at the

University of Puerto Rico, she tried to participate in the university's Reserve Officer Training Corps program but was denied, as women were not allowed at that time.

But Olga never gave up hope, and she went on to fulfill her dream of becoming a commissioned military officer—and then some. She served for 24 years in the U.S. Air Force, retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel. Along the way, she received an Aviation Safety Award for superior airmanship for her handling of an in-flight emergency. After transitioning to the U.S. Air Force Reserves, Olga became the first Latina commercial airline pilot and later upgraded to Captain, flying for American Airlines.

Today, Olga is retired with over 11,000 flight hours to her name. She works with several nonprofit organizations that advocate for inspiring and empowering students, especially those from underserved communities, to pursue careers in aviation and aerospace. As a STEM advocate, she has also volunteered her time as a speaker and role model at local schools, universities, corporations, and military base groups, encouraging young women and men to reach for their dreams. Olga serves as a mentor with the Women in Aviation International, Aviation Explorers, and the School of Aeronautics of the Inter American University in Puerto Rico.

By pioneering many firsts during her career, Olga has shattered stereotypes and served as a powerful role model to those who aspire to become a pilot. From breaking barriers and overcoming challenges as a woman in a male-dominated profession throughout her career, Olga has gained important life insights and perspectives that she shares with everyone, especially women who are working to achieve their dreams.

Olga lives in San Antonio with her husband of 45 years, Edwin—who is also her best friend, supporter, and advocate for everything she sponsors. They have two children, Marcia and Edwin II, and one grandson, Jedi.

Ceremony Program.

PROCESSIONAL

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Nastasha Robles, San Antonio, TX

Bachelor of Arts, Interdisciplinary Studies (K-8)

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Steven E. Johnson

Chancellor, WGU Texas

GRADUATE SPEAKERS

Sarah Williams, Springfield, OR

Bachelor of Science, Nursing

Pooja Sijapati, Irving, TX

Master of Science, Management and Leadership

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

Olga E. Custodio

America's First Latina Fighter Pilot, STEM Advocate

CONFERRAL OF DEGREES

Marni Baker Stein

Provost and Chief Academic Officer

College of Business

College of Health Professions

College of Information Technology

Teachers College

CLOSING REMARKS

Marni Baker Stein

Provost and Chief Academic Officer

RECESSIONAL

Member Governors

The Honorable Michael O. Leavitt, Chairman Emeritus
Governor, Utah 1993–2003

Alaska

The Honorable
Michael J. Dunleavy

Arizona

The Honorable
Doug Ducey

California

The Honorable
Gavin Newsom

Colorado

The Honorable
Jared Polis

Guam

The Honorable
Lou Leon Guerrero

Hawaii

The Honorable
David Ige

Idaho

The Honorable
Brad Little

Indiana

The Honorable
Eric Holcomb

Montana

The Honorable
Steve Bullock

Nebraska

The Honorable
Pete Ricketts

Nevada

The Honorable
Steve Sisolak

New Mexico

The Honorable
Michelle Lujan Grisham

North Dakota

The Honorable
Doug Burgum

Oklahoma

The Honorable
Kevin Stitt

Oregon

The Honorable
Kate Brown

South Dakota

The Honorable
Kristi Noem

Texas

The Honorable
Greg Abbott

Utah

The Honorable
Gary R. Herbert

Washington

The Honorable
Jay R. Inslee

Wyoming

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Mark Gordon

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Professor of Management Practice & Co-Director of the Managing the Future of Work Project, Harvard Business School

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Co-Founder and Executive Director, 100Kin10

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Scott D. Pulsipher

President, Western Governors University

David Simmons

President, Simmons Media Group

Dr. Samuel H. Smith

President Emeritus, Washington State University

Jessie Woolley-Wilson

CEO & President, Dreambox Learning

CONGRATULATIONS, NIGHT OWLS! YOU DID IT!

Welcome to our growing alumni network,
now more than 170,000 strong!

Stay connected, network with colleagues, and learn
about the many resources and benefits available to you:

Visit wgu.edu/alumni

GET SOCIAL

Share the excitement!
Use [#WGUgrad](https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/wgugrad) to tag your commencement posts.



WGU  | ALUMNI

The flower arrangements displayed on stage for today's commencement are placed in memory of those students and graduates we have lost. Our thoughts are with their families and friends.