



# SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

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## **SCHOOL OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

### *Graduate Commencement and Hooding Ceremony*

**MAY 15, 2026**

5:30 P.M.

UNIVERSITY CENTER

EVENT ROOM

# Keynote Speaker

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## **Kathryn (Katie) Striffolino**

Kathryn (Katie) Striffolino is a humanitarian policy and diplomacy practitioner with nearly twenty years of experience advancing civilian protection, human rights, and foreign policy across more than forty countries including high-risk and conflict-affected environments in the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, and Asia-Pacific. She is dedicated to supporting civil society, and her career spans leadership roles at Mercy Corps, Geneva Call, Inter Action, the International Rescue Committee, Save the Children, Amnesty International, and Physicians for Human Rights, where she has shaped domestic and multilateral policy on issues ranging from sanctions and counter-terrorism law to humanitarian access, forced displacement, and protection of civilians. She has lived and worked in New York, Washington, D.C., London, Brussels, Geneva, and in the field in Syria, Turkey, Jordan, Myanmar, Afghanistan, Iraq, Mexico, Colombia, Haiti, Sudan, Uganda, and Kenya. Among her career highlights, she led the multiyear advocacy campaign that secured U.N. Security Council Resolution 2664 — a landmark standing humanitarian exemption from asset freeze sanctions and authored the IASC Bureaucratic and Administrative Impediments framework, now mandatory across major humanitarian operations worldwide. Beyond policy and diplomacy, she advises governments and organizations on security operations and the protection of civilians, operational access in hostile environments, geopolitical risk analysis, strategic communications, and technology-enabled human rights documentation. She regularly guest lectures at educational institutions in the U.S. and across Europe and currently serves as Principal Consultant at Headwind Partners and Adjunct Professor at the U.S. Foreign Service Institute. She previously taught at the U.S. Military's Joint Special Operations University and the U.S. India-Pacific Command's Civilian Protection branch. She holds an M.A. in Refugee Studies and Forced Displacement Law with Distinction from the University of London and dual B.A. degrees in Political Science and International Affairs from the University of New Hampshire. She is fluent in Spanish.

# Graduate Program

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MASTER OF CEREMONIES ..... Martin Edwards, Ph.D.  
*Associate Dean and Professor*

INVOCATION ..... Reverend Brian Muzás, Ph.D.  
*Associate Professor and Director of the  
Center for UN and Global Governance Studies*

WELCOME ..... Courtney Smith, Ph.D.  
*Dean*

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD PRESENTED  
TO SARAH DIMICHINO, NIKKI SCHULDT,  
AND COLIN G. SMITH ..... Philip M. Moremen, J.D., Ph.D.  
*Professor and Faculty Chair*

KEYNOTE ADDRESS ..... Kathryn Strifflino, M.A.  
*Adjunct Professor  
U.S. Foreign Service Institute*

CLASS OF 2026 ADDRESS ..... Nyada Bryant, *Graduate Student*

CONFERRAL OF DEGREES ..... Reverend Brian Muzás, Ph.D.  
*Board of Regents  
Courtney Smith, Ph.D.  
Dean*

HOODING OF DEGREE CANDIDATES  
FOR THE M.A. IN DIPLOMACY  
AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND  
M.S. IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS ..... Margarita Balmaceda, Ph.D.  
*Professor*

R. Joseph Huddleston  
*Associate Professor*

Benjamin Goldfrank, Ph.D.  
*Professor*

Zheng Wang, Ph.D.  
*Professor and Director of the Center for  
Peace and Conflict Studies*

ALMA MATER ..... All Attendees

# **MASTER OF ARTS IN DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

## **DECEMBER 2025**

Sophia G. Blackwood

Mary S. Burke

Sarah Dimichino

Maryann Jalaf

Fatou Kinteh

Andrew M. Norberg

Aidan Tuffy

## **MAY 2026**

Safwan Ali

Nyada Bryant

Ella A. Carver

Zuleyha Cite

Jordan Clark-Sherman

Zachary R. Cooney

Alexander Elgart

Robert Hughes

Kayla A. McIntyre

Michael Peel

Nikki Schuldt

Colin G. Smith

## **AUGUST 2026**

Frances L. Hernandez

Marta Savruk

Mama Soumahoro

# **EXECUTIVE MASTER OF SCIENCE IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

## **DECEMBER 2025**

Elhaj Abdelwhab  
Zena A. Aljabry  
Ashley I. Robinson

## **MAY 2026**

Nicholas T. Dotson  
Matthew J. Frederick

## **AUGUST 2026**

Kyeane Clore-Byrd

# **EXECUTIVE MASTER OF SCIENCE IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND DIPLOMATIC PRACTICE**

## **DECEMBER 2025**

Farah Despeignes  
Clarke Walker

## **MAY 2026**

Anita P. Jallah

## **AUGUST 2026**

Obidi Anamdi

*Inclusion in this program does not constitute official notice of degree.*

# About

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## **SCHOOL OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

Founded in 1997 in alliance with the United Nations Association of the USA, Seton Hall's School of Diplomacy and International Relations is an affiliate member of the Association of Professional Schools of International Affairs. With class offerings just 14 miles from New York City, at the U.N., in the heart of Washington, D.C., online and around the globe, the School brings together an international community of students with a faculty of award-winning scholars and veteran field professionals. Through one-on-one advisement across 20 customizable academic programs, hands on application with over 600 internship partners, and dialogue with nearly 40 international leaders and policy makers each year, we are preparing talented, diplomatic professionals to advance global goals across the public, private and nonprofit sectors.

For more information, visit [\*\*\*diplomacy.shu.edu\*\*\*](http://diplomacy.shu.edu)

## **SETON HALL UNIVERSITY**

One of the country's leading Catholic universities, Seton Hall has been showing the world what great minds can do since 1856. Home to nearly 10,000 undergraduate and graduate students and offering more than 90 rigorous academic programs, Seton Hall's academic excellence has been singled out for distinction by The Princeton Review, U.S. News & World Report and Bloomberg Businessweek. Seton Hall embraces students of all religions and prepares them to be exemplary servant leaders and global citizens.

The University's beautiful main campus in suburban South Orange, New Jersey is only 14 miles from New York City — offering students a wealth of employment, internship, cultural and entertainment opportunities.

For more information, visit [\*\*\*www.shu.edu\*\*\*](http://www.shu.edu)

# Alma Mater

Music by Nicola A. Montani  
Revised: Walter Cohrsen, 1978  
New choral and brass arrangement:  
John Nowik, 2000

Lyrics by Charles A. Byrne ('37)

1. To Al - ma Ma - ter all be - loy - al, keep her  
2. (When on) life's hard stones you - stum - ble pray to

name in pu - rest Light, ne - ver wa - ver from her  
God to be your guide. Think of Se - ton Hall your

pre - cepts guard her ban - ner blue and white.  
mo - ther then forge on in stead - y stride.

Oh, sing her praise to high - est skies and be ye faith - ful

in her eyes for she will fos - ter all your dreams her name is Se - ton

Hall, her name is Se - ton Hall. 1. 2. When on Hall.

