

MBits

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Career Connections: Building Your Personal Board of Directors



MODERATOR
PATIENCE WHITWORTH, PHD
The Ohio State University, 2003



PANELIST
BRUCE WARE
University of Mississippi, 1998



PANELIST
JENNI BIRCH SZOLWINSKI
Purdue University, 1993



PANELIST
BRENDAN WALL, PHD
Illinois State University, 2018

All members, **both current students and alumni**, are invited to join our Spring Career Connections!

Career Connections is Mortar Board's **ongoing professional development series** designed to connect members with influential leaders, alumni, and peers who are shaping industries and communities. Each program provides actionable insight, authentic conversation, and meaningful networking opportunities to help you navigate your next chapter with confidence.

We kick off the year with a dynamic panel on "**Building Your Personal Board of Directors**" — a conversation about intentionally cultivating mentors, sponsors, and champions who will challenge, advocate for, and elevate you throughout your career.

The panel features:

- **Patience Whitworth** (*The Ohio State University, 2003*), Senior Associate Vice Provost for Academic Engagement and Student Success at Carnegie Mellon University
- **Bruce Ware** (*University of Mississippi, 1998*), Executive Chairman & CEO at One America Bancorp Inc.
- **Jenni Birch Szolwinski** (*Purdue University, 1993*), Director of Industry Relations in the College of Engineering and Computing at Miami University
- **Brendan Wall** (*Illinois State University, 2018*), Post-doctoral Scientist - Peptide Chemistry at Eli Lilly and Company

Monday, March 23, 2026

1:00pm Eastern / 12:00pm
Central / 11:00am Mountain /
10:00am Pacific / 7:00am
Hawaii

RSVP for Career Connections

Virtual via Zoom

Recognizing Excellence: Collegiate *and* Alumni Award Nominations Open

Collegiate Awards

It's time to celebrate the incredible work happening across Mortar Board! Nominations are now open for our **Collegiate Awards**, recognizing chapters that exemplify excellence in scholarship, leadership, and service. Chapters can apply for **Outstanding Achievement**, **Project Excellence**, **Inclusive Excellence**, and the **Gold Torch Award** directly through the Chapter Annual Report. Alumni or advisors who would like to nominate a chapter for one of these honors can use a separate nomination form.

Applications are also open for several of Mortar Board's highest honors, including the **Ruth Weimer Mount Chapter Excellence Award**, **Freeman & Fox Most Improved Chapter Award**, **Excellence in Advising Award**, and the **Starlington Prize**. Each of these awards has its own application. Learn more and apply here:

[Submit Your Nomination and View Past Awardees](#)

A quick reminder that the **Chapter Annual Report** is also open and due **May 15**. It is required and provides a helpful look at the work your chapter accomplished this year. Many chapters also use it as a transition document for next year's leaders.

[Submit Your Report Here](#)

Alumni Awards

Are you or another Mortar Board alum you know making a difference in your profession, community, or continued service to Mortar Board?

We want to recognize outstanding achievements and dedications! Mortar Board is now accepting nominations and applications for our annual Mortar

Board Alumni Awards. These awards celebrate alumni who exemplify the ideals of scholarship, leadership, and service in their lives and careers.

Deadline to apply/nominate: May 15

[Learn More and Submit Your Nomination for Alumni Awards](#)

Step Into Leadership: Two National Volunteer Roles Open



Two national volunteer opportunities are now open, and we're excited to **invite students** and recent **alumni** to apply.

Become a **Conference Advisory Board Member**

The **Conference Advisory Board (CAB)** is seeking members to serve on the larger Conference Team, meeting biweekly in a virtual format to discuss ways to enhance the conference experience for collegiate members. This group will focus on engagement and creating a meaningful, student-centered conference experience, with a particular emphasis on planning for the in-person **National Conference in Columbus, Ohio, September 25–27, 2026**.

[Learn More & Submit Your CAB Application](#)

Applications are due April 1.

Become a **Region Coordinator**

We're also accepting applications for **Region Coordinators**, a **crucial volunteer role** that supports and guides chapters throughout the year. Each of the six regions is supported by a team of 2–4 Region Coordinators who **work collaboratively to assist chapters and strengthen regional connections**. Region Coordinators can expect to spend approximately 5–10 hours per month and will be part of our national leadership team.

[Learn More & Submit Region Coordinator Interest](#)

Deadline to apply is April 1, or you may **nominate someone** for this role today.



Conference Registration is Open: Join us in Columbus!



Join us for the **Mortar Board National Conference 2026 in Columbus, Ohio, September 25-27!**

Each chapter is **required to send at least one student representative**, and alumni and advisors are warmly invited to attend as well. **Registration is now open!** Don't miss this opportunity to connect with Mortar Board members from across the country, learn more about the organization, share your chapter's successes, and invest in your personal and professional development. You'll return home with fresh ideas, new connections, and inspiration to strengthen your community.

[Learn More and Register for the 2026 Conference](#)



Gear Up for Graduation

Graduation is just around the corner—make sure you're ready to walk the stage in style. Our official Mortar Board stoles, cords, and medallions are designed to help every student look their best on the big day! Now is the perfect time to place your order to ensure everything arrives on time, and if you order in bulk, you save!

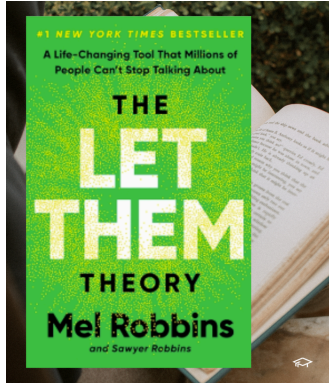
Orders of 10 items or more are eligible for a 10% discount and free standard shipping with the promo code **BulkDiscount**.

Order today and get yourself graduation ready with Mortar Board style!



Get Your Regalia Here

Mark Your Calendar for the Spring Mortar Board Book Club



Sunday, April 12, 2026

7:00pm Eastern / 6:00pm Central /
5:00pm Mountain / 4:00pm Pacific /
1:00pm Hawaii

All members are welcome to join for connection, engagement, and thoughtful discussion as we dive into *The Let Them Theory* by Mel Robbins (and Sawyer Robbins).

Register for Book Club

Passing the Torch Legacy Society

Have you included Mortar Board in your estate plans? Please let us know by filling our [online form](#) or emailing give@mortarboard.org so we can officially welcome you to the **Passing the Torch Legacy Society**. Your generosity is a commitment to scholarship, leadership, and service—values that endure the test of time. Click below to learn more about making a deferred gift and passing the torch to future generations of Mortar Board.

Learn More

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We'd love to hear what's new—send us your latest accomplishments and updates!

Email us at news@mortarboard.org with your update.

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Connect with us: 614-488-4094 | mortarboard@mortarboard.org
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