

Mortar Board National Conference 2026

COLUMBUS

Greetings!

We're officially **two weeks away** from gathering in Columbus for the 2026 Mortar Board National Conference! As we get closer, it's **time to start preparing** for an inspiring few days of learning, connection, leadership, and celebration with Mortar Board members from across the country.

In this email, you'll find important information to help you make the most of your conference experience, including the **Guide to Governance**, which we ask all members to **read before arriving**; our education **session options**; the **packing list**, transportation details; and several **important conference reminders**.

Take a few minutes to review everything so you can arrive prepared, informed, and ready to make the most of your time at National Conference!

GUIDE TO GOVERNANCE

Mortar Board is **student governed**, making your voice an important part of shaping the future of our Society. Each chapter will be represented by one student delegate; if there are multiple students from the same chapter in attendance, the student with the highest-ranking officer position is the official delegate. **At the National Conference**, you'll have the opportunity to **participate in important governance discussions and cast votes** on matters that impact Mortar Board's future.

Before you arrive, please take a few minutes to **read the Guide to Governance** so you understand how our governance process works, what to expect during the business meeting, and how your vote helps shape the Society we share. An informed vote is a powerful one!

[View the Guide to Governance](#)

CONFERENCE SESSIONS & KEYNOTE

Get ready to learn and be inspired! Discover the educational line up below that will make this year's conference one to remember.

Pre-Conference Sessions

Are you arriving early on Friday? Check out the Pre-conference Session options beginning at 12 PM.

- Are You the Author? - Building a Life with Intention
- Service Project: [Feed the Kids Columbus](#)
- Columbus Walking Tour
- Advisor Pre-Conference Session

**View
Session
Descriptions**

Education Sessions

BLOCK 1 - Saturday, September 26 at 11 AM

The Pressure to Perform: Redefining Success & Wellbeing

High-achieving students often face pressure to excel academically, professionally, and personally while balancing increasingly demanding schedules. This session explores practical strategies for managing stress, setting boundaries, and pursuing success without sacrificing your well-being.

Fellowships Demystified: Advice From the Winners

Fellowships can open doors that shape your future. Hear directly from fellowship winners about developing a strong application, preparation, and making your application stand out.

The Programming Playbook: Student Leaders Share What Works

What makes a chapter program successful, engaging, and worth showing up for? Student leaders from across Mortar Board share their best ideas, lessons learned, and practical tips for planning programs that connect with members and make an impact.

BLOCK 2 - Saturday, September 26 at 12 PM

The People in Your Corner: Building Your Board of Mentors

No one builds a successful career or life alone, and the right people can help you navigate challenges, recognize opportunities, and grow into your goals. Explore how to intentionally build your own personal board of directors by identifying the mentors, advocates, peers, and advisors who can support you at different stages of your journey.

Show Me the Money: Fundraising & Financial Management

Strong chapters need strong financial practices and creative approaches to generating support. Learn practical strategies for fundraising, budgeting, managing chapter finances, and making the most of the resources available to your chapter

Make Your Mark: Raising Your Chapter's Campus Profile

A great chapter can only make an impact if people know what it is doing. Student leaders share strategies for increasing chapter visibility, telling your story, building campus partnerships, and showcasing the accomplishments of your members.

BLOCK 3 - Saturday, September 26 at 4 PM

Leadership When It's Hard

Leadership often means navigating challenging personalities, competing perspectives, and conversations

The Mortar Board Year: Lead, Connect & Make an Impact

Your Mortar Board year is an opportunity to build

Bring People In: Building a More Engaged Chapter

Getting members to join is one thing; getting them to participate, connect, and feel

that do not go as planned. Learn how to respond with empathy while still communicating clearly, maintaining boundaries, and moving difficult conversations forward.

relationships, develop as a leader, serve your community, and leave something meaningful behind. Explore ways to make the most of your membership and turn one year of Mortar Board into an experience that stays with you long after graduation.

like they belong is another. Student leaders share what has worked for their chapters, from creating a sense of community to increasing participation and turning members into active contributors.

Saturday Luncheon Keynote



The Good Life: Why Relationships Are Our Greatest Achievement

Discover why connection is the most important predictor of a good life. In this engaging, story-rich keynote, Kathy Cleveland Bull blends research, humor, and heartfelt insight to challenge your perspective and inspire deeper relationships, stronger leadership, and renewed joy.

PACKING LIST

CLOTHES

- Campus spirit outfit for Friday. Wear your school gear and show your pride! (*Jeans are okay*)
- Business casual outfit for Saturday
- Semi-formal/cocktail outfit for Saturday evening
- Conference T-shirt—provided for you at conference registration (*Jeans are okay*)
- Comfortable walking/business casual shoes
- Dress shoes
- Blazer, cardigan, and/or light jacket for layering (*hotels can be chilly with air conditioning*)

OTHER ESSENTIALS

- Your Mortar Board pin
- Phone + charger
- Toiletries + personal items
- Reusable water bottle (*there are refill stations in the hotel*)

We've put together a **complete Conference Packing List PDF** with dress-code guidance, outfit suggestions, conference essentials, travel items, and helpful packing tips.

[View & Download the Full Packing List](#)

REMINDERS

Confirm your travel plans

Will you be driving or flying? Plan to arrive before the conference start: Friday, September 25 at 2 PM and depart after conference closing at 12:30 PM on Sunday, September 27.

If you are flying and haven't yet booked: consider booking with **Southwest for a discount on flights**. [Click here](#) to view flights with the Southwest Airline discount.

If you have not yet booked your travel, please contact the National Office for assistance at conference@mortarboard.org.

Getting to the Hotel

Renaissance Columbus Downtown Hotel

50 North Third Street
Columbus, OH 43215

Flying? Complimentary Friday airport shuttle information below.

Driving? Hotel parking information below.



Airport Shuttle information:

We will provide a **free shuttle between the airport and the hotel** during our busiest travel times:

- Friday from 10:30 AM - 3:30 PM
- Sunday from 12:30 PM - 4:30 PM

Mortar Board will run the “Granville Concierge” shuttle will run every half hour during those times. Those wishing to use the free shuttle should meet at the bottom of the escalators between Baggage Claims 3 and 4. **You do not need to sign up ahead of time.** Look for a greeter with a Mortar Board sign!



Parking information:

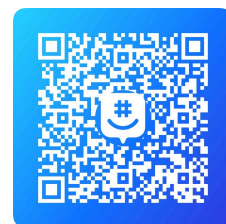
Parking is **\$35 per night** and is valet only.

If this presents a financial hardship, please contact conference@mortarboard.org.

Join the official conference platform: GroupMe

Use the link below or scan the QR code to request to join our Mortar Board 2026 National Conference official event group.

[Join the GroupMe](#)



Use this graphic to let your social networks know
you will be attending the conference.

Don't forget to tag us so we can celebrate with you!
Instagram @mortar_board
Facebook @MortarBoard
LinkedIn @Mortar Board National College Honor
Society

[Download the Shareable Graphic Here](#)



COMING SOON...

You can expect to receive one additional email at the beginning of conference week (the week of September 21). This email will include a packing list, travel reminders, and more!

Did you get our last logistics email? It included important information such as ways you can best represent your chapter and the conference schedule, to help you prepare for the conference. If you missed it, or want to review it again [CLICK HERE](#) or find it on our website at mortarboard.org/conference/faq/ under "Resources: Pre-conference Emails."

If you have any questions in the meantime check out our website, mortarboard.org/conference/ or contact conference@mortarboard.org.

We can't wait to welcome you to Columbus and celebrate the people, leadership, and impact that make Mortar Board so special.

See you in Columbus!



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