



Presidential Investiture of
Michael P. Shannon

November 10, 2023

Our Mission

The University of North Georgia, a regional multi-campus institution and premier senior military college, provides a culture of academic excellence in a student-focused environment that includes quality education, service, research, and creativity. This is accomplished through broad access to comprehensive academic and co-curricular programs that develop students into leaders for a diverse and global society.

The University of North Georgia is a University System of Georgia leadership institution and is The Military College of Georgia®.



Michael P. Shannon, Ph.D.



The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia named Dr. Michael P. “Mike” Shannon as UNG’s president on June 1, and he took office July 1, 2023.

A native of New Jersey, President Shannon is a first-generation college graduate and was commissioned through Army ROTC. He holds a bachelor’s degree in aerospace engineering and a master’s in aeronautical science from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. He also holds a master’s in health physics and a Ph.D. in nuclear and radiological engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology.

President Shannon served as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army for 20 years, retiring in 2015 with the rank of lieutenant colonel. After operational Army service as an Infantry and Signal Corps officer with assignments in the 82d Airborne Division, the 35th Signal Brigade (18th Airborne Corps) and the 2nd Infantry Division, he was selected to serve as a U.S. Army Nuclear and Counterproliferation officer.

For more than 10 years, he provided leadership and technical and operational expertise to the U.S. Department of Defense as an expert in nuclear technology issues and later held leadership assignments with the Defense Threat Reduction Agency. Shannon also served at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point during two different leadership assignments, as an instructor and later as an assistant professor in the Department of Physics and Nuclear Engineering. At West Point, he was actively engaged in teaching and research along with several activities in support of cadet and Army officer development.

Prior to joining the University of North Georgia, President Shannon served as a member of Georgia Tech’s executive leadership team and was responsible for strategic leadership and operations of human resources, finance and budget, information technology, facilities and infrastructure, capital planning, campus security, and emergency response. In addition, he served in numerous faculty, leadership and advisory roles, including as a research faculty member and principal investigator in the Advanced Concepts Laboratory at the Georgia Tech Research Institute.

President Shannon continues to serve veterans’ causes, is an active member of his church and is a coach for multiple local youth sports programs. He and his wife, Jessica, have four children.

Investiture Ceremony

Musical Prelude

Performed by the UNG Low Brass Collective

Processional*

Suite Danserye by Tielman Susato,
performed by the UNG Low Brass Collective

Order of the Procession

Dr. Chuck Robertson, Mace Bearer and Chair of the UNG Faculty Senate;
Presidents and Delegates from Institutions of Higher Education,
The University Faculty and Staff, Members of the President's Cabinet,
Distinguished Guests, USG Leadership, and President Shannon

Posting of Colors and the National Anthem

University of North Georgia UNG Color Guard

The Star-Spangled Banner arranged by James McKelvy,
performed by Le Belle Voci

Welcome

Dr. Chaudron Gille
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Invocation

Pastor Mike Linch, NorthStar Church

Greetings from the Board of Regents

Chairman Harold Reynolds

Video Greetings to the President

Musical Performance

Will the Circle Be Unbroken arranged by J. David Moore,
performed by Le Belle Voci

Video Greetings to the President

Introduction of President Shannon

Dr. Ángel Cabrera
President of the Georgia Institute of Technology

Greetings to the President

Investiture of the President

Dr. Sonny Perdue
Chancellor of the University System of Georgia

Inaugural Address

President Shannon

Special Presentation and Benediction

Rabbi Larry Sernovitz, CEO, Hillels of Georgia

Recessional*

March from the Second Suite by Gustav Holst,
performed by the UNG Low Brass Collective

* Please stand as you are able.

Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia

Harold Reynolds, Chair
Erin Hames, Vice Chair
Doug Aldridge
Tom Bradbury
Richard “Tim” Evans
W. Allen Gudenrath
Bárbara Rivera Holmes

Samuel D. Holmes
C. Thomas Hopkins, Jr., MD
James M. Hull
Cade Joiner
Patrick C. Jones
C. Everett Kennedy, III
Sarah-Elizabeth Langford

Lowery Houston May
Jose R. Perez
Neil L. Pruitt, Jr.
T. Dallas Smith
James K. Syfan, III

Presidents of the University of North Georgia and its legacy institutions

In 2013, Gainesville State College and North Georgia College & State University consolidated to become the University of North Georgia.

David W. Lewis

North Georgia Agricultural College
1873-1885

William Starr Basinger

North Georgia Agricultural College
1886-1893

Isaac W. Waddell

North Georgia Agricultural College
1893-1897

Joseph Spencer Stewart

North Georgia Agricultural College
1897-1903

Edward Spain Avis

North Georgia Agricultural College
1903-1904

Gustavus Richard Glenn

North Georgia Agricultural College
1904-1922

Marion DuBois

North Georgia Agricultural College
1922-1925

John W. West

North Georgia College
1925-1932

Frank G. Branch

North Georgia College
1932-1933

Jonathan Clark Rogers

North Georgia College
1933-1949

Merritt E. Hoag

North Georgia College
1949-1970

Hugh M. Mills Jr.

Gainesville Junior College
1966-1983

John H. Owen

North Georgia College
1970-1992

J. Foster Watkins

Gainesville College
1983-1997

Delmas J. Allen

North Georgia College
1993-1996

Sherman R. Day

North Georgia College & State University
1996-1999

Martha T. Nesbitt

Gainesville State College
1997-2012

Nathaniel Hansford

North Georgia College & State University
1999-2004

David L. Potter

North Georgia College & State University
2005-2011

Bonita C. Jacobs

University of North Georgia
2011-2023

Presidents and Delegates from Institutions of Higher Education

List as of Nov. 1, 2023; year accompanying each institution is the year it was founded.

University of Georgia (1785)

Dr. Charles N. Davis*
Dean, Grady College of
Journalism & Mass Communication

Norwich University (1819)

Mr. Bill Gibson
Norwich University Alumnus

Duke University (1838)

Dr. Martha Nesbitt
Duke University alumna
President Emerita of Gainesville State College

Gordon State College (1852)

Dr. Donald J. Green
Interim President

Brenau University (1878)

Dr. David Barnett
Interim President

Georgia Military College (1879)

Col. Chip Kirby, USA, Retired*
Senior Vice President & CFO

Middle Georgia State University (1884)

Ms. Ember Bishop Bentley*
Vice President, Government &
External Relations & Chief of Staff

Georgia Institute of Technology (1885)

Dr. Devesh Ranjan
Chair of the School of Mechanical Engineering

Georgia College & State University (1889)

Cathy Cox, Esq.
President

Georgia Southern University (1906)

Dr. Kyle Marrero
President

Georgia Southwestern University (1906)

Dr. Neal Weaver
President

South Georgia State College (1906)

Mr. Jimmy Harper
Vice President of Enrollment Management and
Information Technology

University of West Georgia (1906)

Dr. Brendan B. Kelly
President

Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (1908)

Dr. Tracy Brundage
President

College of Coastal Georgia (1961)

Dr. Johnny Evans, Jr.
Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs

Columbus State University (1963)

Dr. Stuart Rayfield
President

Dalton State College (1963)

Dr. John M. Fuchko III
President

Kennesaw State University (1963)

Dr. Kathy Schwaig
President

Georgia Highlands College (1970)

Dr. Mike Hobbs
President

Atlanta Metropolitan State College (1974)

Dr. Ingrid Thompson-Sellers
President

Georgia Gwinnett College (2005)

Dr. Jann L. Joseph
President

*UNG graduates

The Symbols of Academic Tradition

Academic Regalia

Academic regalia dates to the Middle Ages, when it may have been necessary for scholars to wear gowns and cowls in the unheated halls of academe of the period. The robes and hoods have evolved as ceremonial garments that, in accordance with standards established by the American Council on Education, symbolize level of degree, academic field and the awarding institution.

Black robes and hoods are traditional for all degrees, but have various characteristics depending upon degree level and discipline. The associate degree and bachelor's degree robes have pointed sleeves. The master's degree robe has an oblong sleeve, with the rear part square cut and the front part cut away. The robe for the doctoral degree has bell-shaped sleeves. Robes for the bachelor's or master's degrees are untrimmed, while the robe for the doctoral degree is faced with black velvet and three bars of velvet across the sleeves.

The color of the velvet on robes and hoods may be black or distinctive to the field of study to which the degree pertains. The colors associated with academic disciplines are:

Agriculture — Maize

Commerce, Accountancy, Business — Drab

Economics — Copper

Engineering — Orange

Forestry — Russet

Law — Purple

Medicine — Green

Nursing — Apricot

Pharmacy — Olive Green

Physical Education — Sage Green

Public Health — Salmon Pink

Social Work — Citron

Veterinary Science — Gray

Arts, Letters, Humanities — White

Dentistry — Lilac

Education — Light Blue

Fine Arts, including Architecture — Brown

Journalism — Crimson

Library Science — Lemon

Music — Pink

Oratory (Speech) — Silver Gray

Philosophy — Dark Blue

Public Administration & Foreign Service — Peacock Blue

Science — Golden Yellow

Theology — Scarlet



The Seal

The University of North Georgia seal incorporates symbols associated with the university's heritage and mission. The seal represents the university's highest authority and its use is reserved for ceremonial events or official university documents.



One side of the seal depicts the steeple of Price Memorial Hall, which is on the National Register of Historic Places and represents the institution's establishment in 1873 upon the site of a United States mint that was significant to the region and state; the steeple is surrounded by the mountains and waterways that are integral to the communities of our region; laurel leaves symbolize academic and military achievement; and two stars represent the University of North Georgia's role as one of only six Senior Military Colleges in the nation and its designation by the University System of Georgia as a State Leadership Institution.

The other side of the seal features the UNG Corps of Cadets' crest, the Boar's Head Brigade. In addition to a boar's head, it includes the Cherokee Rose, the state flower of Georgia; crossed rifles; the corps motto — Truth and Wisdom; and the university's designation as The Military College of Georgia.

The Mace

Once used as a battle weapon, the mace is frequently carried today in university ceremonies. The University of North Georgia mace is a 42-inch walnut staff that supports the UNG seal cast in bronze. The mace was given to the university by the Student Government Association in 2013 as a symbol of unification during the consolidation of Gainesville State College and North Georgia College & State University.



Presidential Regalia

The regalia for the president of the University of North Georgia includes several elements to be worn at ceremonial events to identify the president as the highest officer of the institution. The president's robe features four blue chevrons. The chain of office features a cast bronze medallion of the university seal supported by a chain with links upon which the names and years of office for previous presidents are engraved.

A ribbon of woven tapestry, featuring the gold steeple of Price Memorial Hall against a background of the mountains of North Georgia, adorns a velvet stole completing the president's regalia. The original tapestry was designed by Tommye Scanlin, Professor Emerita of Fine Arts, in 1993, to support the medallion worn by the president at that time. Scanlin and Jo-Marie Karst, instructor of visual arts, transformed the tapestry into a stole that continues its legacy as a part of the regalia for the president of the University of North Georgia.





A Message from President Michael P. Shannon

Thank you for attending today's investiture ceremony. I am honored to serve as the University of North Georgia's 21st president, and your participation has made this celebration very special.

During my first months in office, I conducted a listening tour across UNG's five campuses to learn about the university from students, faculty, staff, and community members. From that process and through conversations with colleagues, I developed "Bold Forward: Running into our Calling," a white paper that identifies a strategic vision in which UNG will differentiate itself in the coming years, deliver transformational educational opportunities to students, and serve the workforce needs of our region, state and nation.

We are an institution within the University System of Georgia, one of the strongest public university systems in the country. We are a State Leadership Institution, The Military College of Georgia, and one of only six federally designated senior military colleges in the nation. We provide exceptional leaders and workforce talent for Georgia and America.

With these strengths, UNG is uniquely positioned to be transformative in seven key strategic areas in which we already have a firm foothold and are developing a laser focus, clear direction, and fueled acceleration. Together, we are making strategic big bets to be disruptive and innovate like never before. These strategic bets are founded in the economic needs of our region, our state, and the nation, and they emerge from our bedrock value that our students come first — always.

➤ **Design and Build a Leadership Foundry**

UNG is designated as a state leadership institution by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia — a designation we need to supercharge for our students, staff, and faculty. Leaders are made, not born. Like a "foundry", where precious metals are transformed within a crucible, our leadership foundry will transform our students through the crucible of a leadership journey.

➤ **Accelerate the Fine Arts and Entertainment**

Georgia's entertainment industry, including sound, game design and virtual entertainment, is seeing significant growth, and UNG provides students with hands-on experience in each of these areas to include all aspects of film production. A strong collaborative approach across disciplines with a focus on storytelling in all of its forms, gives students the opportunity to create interdisciplinary teams that mirror work in the industry and promote innovation.

➤ **Supercharge Workforce Development**

Georgia faces critical shortages of healthcare workers, teachers, business leaders, and agricultural leaders, and the data show these workforce needs will continue to increase. We need to rethink and supercharge how we deliver these academic programs, including accelerated paths, competency-based approaches, and innovative delivery of degree requirements, such as online options.

Expand the STEM Value Proposition

In today's rapidly growing economy, northeast Georgia needs college graduates who have a strong foundation in science, who can integrate information across disciplines, and who are critical thinkers and problem-solvers. There is an ongoing and unprecedented need for a skilled workforce that possesses the ability to couple the STEM (science, technology, math, and engineering) fields with analytical and problem-solving skills.

Get in the National Security Game

We live in a complex world with numerous threats to U.S. national security. The University of North Georgia has a long tradition of strengthening America by delivering functional experts who are leaders in multiple domains.

Deliver the Corps of the Future

Throughout its storied history, our Corps of Cadets has been a robust, relevant, world-class immersive leader development program graduating leaders of character for the Total Army, public and private entities, and civic organizations for the good of our Nation, and the state and communities they serve. The Corps of the Future is destined to leap ahead of our Senior Military College peers and position us to compete for the most talented scholar-athlete-leader, patriotic young Americans.

Build the Most Competitive, Value-Added Division II Athletics Program in the Nation

UNG athletics has a strong tradition of success in competition, the classroom, and our communities. Leveraging this tradition of excellence, we will build the most competitive, value-added DII athletics program in the nation.

Our strategy is grounded in our shared value — our students come first — always. The college years are uniquely formative. Universities should create experiences that cultivate curiosity, unlock in every student what they don't know about themselves, and help every student determine the best version of themselves. This is our calling — the time is now. We are in our moment — this is the time to be transformative and deliver at scale. Our seven strategic big bets provide the opportunity in which we will remain relevant, plant our flag, boldly move forward, and run into our calling. The University of North Georgia has the necessary ingredients, the people, and the calling to create this picture of our preferred future — the most innovative, dynamic, legacy-making university in America. Let us boldly run and deliver like never before!



BOLD 
FORWARD:
*Running Into
Our Calling*



Blue Ridge • Cumming • Dahlonega • Gainesville • Oconee • Online
UNG is designated as a State Leadership Institution and as The Military College of Georgia®.