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AWARDS GALA PROGRAM



NOVEMBER 8, 2026
6:00–8:00 PM
THE HOTEL AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

SYNERGY ECP

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PROUD SPONSOR · TRANSFORMATIVE SYNERGIES 2026

Congratulations to Bowie State University on its Inaugural National Conference

We salute the graduate students, faculty, and scholars building interdisciplinary pathways for a resilient society.

Synergy ECP, LLC delivers mission-focused technology to the Intelligence Community and the Department of War. Founded in 2007 and headquartered in Columbia, Maryland, our team of over 250 professionals supports national security missions from secure facilities in Maryland and Virginia.

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Dear Honored Guests,

Welcome to the Transformative Synergies Awards Gala, an evening dedicated to celebrating excellence, honoring achievement, and recognizing the extraordinary contributions of scholars, researchers, and visionary leaders who are shaping the future through discovery, innovation, and service.

It is my distinct pleasure to welcome you to this special occasion as we gather to recognize individuals and teams whose dedication to scholarly inquiry exemplifies the transformative power of research. Tonight, we celebrate not only remarkable accomplishments but also the intellectual curiosity, perseverance, creativity, and commitment that make those accomplishments possible.

At Bowie State University, we believe that research is more than the pursuit of knowledge. It is an instrument of transformation, a means of challenging established boundaries, illuminating new possibilities, and addressing the pressing issues of our time. Through the Graduate School, we are committed to cultivating an environment in which emerging and established scholars alike are empowered to pursue bold ideas, engage in meaningful collaborations, and translate their discoveries into lasting impact.

The achievements we honor this evening remind us that excellence rarely emerges in isolation. Behind every discovery lies a journey of inquiry, determination, mentorship, and collaboration. Our award recipients embody these qualities, demonstrating what becomes possible when intellectual ambition is joined with purpose and when individual accomplishments contribute to collective advancement.

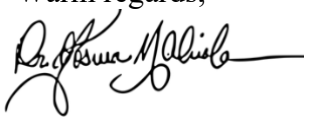
As we celebrate our distinguished honorees, we also recognize the faculty, mentors, colleagues, families, and institutional partners whose encouragement and support have helped make their achievements possible. Their contributions remind us that scholarly success is both an individual accomplishment and a shared endeavor.

To our award recipients, congratulations on this well-deserved recognition. May tonight's celebration affirm the significance of your contributions and inspire you to continue pursuing new frontiers of knowledge. To our guests and supporters, thank you for joining us in recognizing the remarkable individuals whose work reflects the promise and possibilities of transformative scholarship.

May this evening be a celebration of achievement, a source of inspiration, and a reminder that the most enduring contributions to knowledge are those that enrich lives, strengthen communities, and shape a better future.

Welcome to an evening of distinction, inspiration, and celebration.

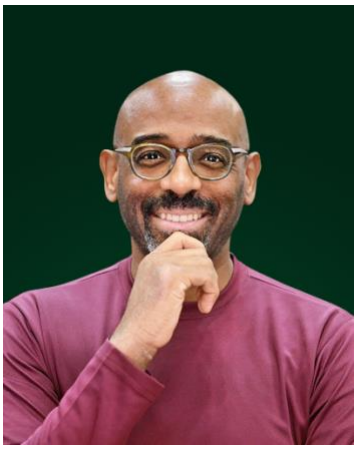
Warm regards,



Dean of the Graduate School

Master of Ceremonies

Tyrome Smith



Tyrome Smith is an executive strategist, innovation architect, and organizational transformation leader with more than 25 years of experience operating at the intersection of national security, economic development, innovation, and human-centered change. He currently serves as Interim Director of Economic Development and Strategic Development at Bowie State University, where he advances initiatives that strengthen entrepreneurship, innovation ecosystems, and strategic growth.

Throughout his career, Tyrome has built a reputation for translating complex challenges into actionable strategies that drive organizational performance and lasting impact. While serving at the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), he designed and delivered Lean Startup and innovation curricula to more than 1,500 personnel and led large-scale organizational mergers that affected thousands of employees. His work has consistently focused on helping organizations navigate uncertainty, accelerate innovation, and build cultures capable of sustained transformation.

Tyrome's executive education includes credentials from McKinsey & Company, UC Berkeley Haas School of Business, and UCLA Anderson School of Management. He has served as a mentor and coach for NSF I-Corps, Techstars, and Founder Institute Türkiye, and as an Entrepreneur in Residence for the University System of Maryland, guiding founders, innovators, and emerging ventures through commercialization and growth.

A respected facilitator, coach, and culture builder, Tyrome operates effectively at every level of an organization, from executive leadership teams to frontline staff. He previously served on the national board of the NIST Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) and is a member of the Stimson Center's Alfred Lee Loomis Innovation Council.

An in-demand keynote speaker, moderator, and master of ceremonies, Tyrome has appeared on stages for organizations including NASA, UNCF, the Federal Laboratory Consortium, and TD Jakes' Good Soil Leadership Conference. He is also co-host of the podcast What Problem Are You Solving?, where he explores innovation, entrepreneurship, leadership, and systems change.

Additionally, Tyrome is an AKRI Fellow and faculty member of the Leadership Development and Role Success (LDRS) program, where he applies systems thinking and leadership development principles to help individuals and organizations navigate the human dynamics of change.

The Evening's Program



5:30 p.m.
Reception

6:00 p.m.
Master of Ceremonies
Tyrome Smith

Welcome
Dean Ofosuwa M. Abiola

Provost Greetings: Advancing Scholarship, Innovation & Impact
Provost Guy-Alain Amoussou

6:15 p.m.
Presentation of Awards – Part One

6:45 p.m.
Dinner

7:15 p.m.
Presentation of Awards – Part Two

7:45 p.m.
Closing Remarks

Award Recipients

INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

The Groundbreaking Research Methodology Award

Ms. Cambly Morales-Lemus
Matthew Akinmolayan

The Innovative Ideation Award

Christian Smith
Agbo Idoko
Atoosa Zarpak

The Visionary Research Teams Award

Matthew Akinmolayan
Abraham Ewnetu
Trinity Bowling

The Community Impact Award

Deborah Adeyemi
Earl Nimley

The Beyond Bowie Alumni Impact Award

Comfort Adegboye
Amanda Burroughs
Dr. Temilade Aladeokin

The Graduate Faculty Catalyst Award

Dr. Supriyo Ray

—

SIGNATURE HONOR

The Joseph A. Wiseman Award

Anjolaoluwa Olojo
Jarrid Denman

Award Descriptions

The Groundbreaking Research Methodology Award

The Groundbreaking Research Methodology Award recognizes a graduate student who has developed or applied a research methodology that defies traditional academic constraints. It honors scholars who have pioneered unique ways of gathering data, analyzing movement or culture, or synthesizing disparate technical and creative processes. Whether through high-tech 3D motion analysis, archival "excavation" of silenced voices, or novel experimental designs in STEM, this award celebrates the *how* of research as much as the *what*.

The Innovative Ideation Award

The Innovative Ideation Award recognizes a graduate student who demonstrates exceptional creativity through the development of original ideas, solutions, or innovations with the potential for meaningful impact. This award celebrates the student who moves beyond theory into creation; the student who conceptualizes and develops original products, software, intellectual property, ventures, or other novel contributions that address real-world challenges.

The Visionary Research Teams Award

The Visionary Research Teams Award recognizes a team of Graduate Students whose research exemplifies forward-thinking innovation, interdisciplinary collaboration, and the potential to drive meaningful change. In alignment with the Transformative Synergies conference goal, this award honors work that not only advances knowledge within a specific field but also bridges ideas, perspectives, and disciplines to create impactful, real-world solutions.

The Community Impact Award

The Community Impact Award recognizes a graduate student who has demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to applying their research and professional skills to address critical societal needs. This award celebrates scholarship that is "in service" to others—bridging the gap between academic theory and community practice.

The Beyond Bowie Alumni Impact Award

The Beyond Bowie Alumni Impact Award honors a Bowie State graduate alumnus whose accomplishments demonstrate the lasting reach and impact of Bowie graduate education beyond the university. This award honors an alumnus of Bowie State University graduate school who has demonstrated significant professional achievement, scholarship, innovation, leadership, public service, community impact, or contribution to their field.

The Graduate Faculty Catalyst Award

The Graduate Faculty Catalyst Award honors a graduate faculty member whose mentorship, scholarship, teaching, advocacy, or research leadership has had an exceptional impact on the development and success of graduate students.

The Joseph A. Wiseman Award

The Joseph A. Wiseman Award is a distinguished honor presented during the Transformative Synergies conference gala. This award recognizes a graduate student who embodies excellence across scholarship, leadership, service, and interdisciplinary engagement. Named in honor of Joseph A. Wiseman, this award pays tribute to his legacy as a visionary leader in graduate education. As the founding director of the Graduate Division at Bowie State University, Wiseman played a pivotal role in shaping and advancing graduate studies, advocating academic excellence, student development, and institutional growth. This award honors a graduate student who exemplifies the spirit of transformative synergy. The recipient demonstrates not only academic achievement, but also the ability to bridge disciplines, foster innovation, and contribute to solutions that address complex, real-world challenges.

Special Thanks

The Bowie State University Graduate School extends its sincere appreciation to all whose dedication and generosity helped make the Transformative Synergies Awards Gala a celebration of scholarly excellence. We are especially grateful to those who contributed to the nomination and selection processes, our valued sponsor, Synergy ECP, and the faculty and staff whose support made this occasion possible. We extend special recognition to the Graduate School team for their exceptional commitment, thoughtful planning, and tireless efforts in bringing this celebration to life. Together, your contributions reflect the spirit of collaboration, innovation, and excellence that defines Transformative Synergies.

WITH GRATITUDE TO OUR CONFERENCE SPONSOR



Synergy ECP, LLC

Synergy ECP, LLC delivers mission-focused technology to the Intelligence Community and the Department of War. Founded in 2007 and headquartered in Columbia, Maryland, our team of over 250 professionals works across three pillars: Integrated Data Solutions, Cybersecurity Operations, and Mission Enablement. Learn more at synergyecp.com.

WITH SPECIAL APPRECIATION TO THE NOMINATIONS PROCESS PARTICIPANTS

Dr. Darsana Josyula

Dr. Ann Hilliard

Dr. Hoda El-Sayed

Dr. Amina Ayodeji-Ogundiran

Dr. Hamdan Alabsi

Dr. George Ude

Dr. Regina Johnson

Dr. Kimberly Mills

WITH SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL STAFF

Deziree' Bradford-Yancey

Dr. Honor McElroy

Kamryn Kiser

Naomi Lewis

Dr. Kesla Holder

Dymonde Norman

Bolanle Oji

About Bowie State University

Founded in 1865, Bowie State University is Maryland's first historically Black university and one of the oldest in the nation. From its early mission of expanding educational opportunity, Bowie State has evolved into a vibrant public institution where tradition drives discovery. Today, our students and faculty pursue new knowledge across the arts, humanities, business, STEM, health, and education—embodying the exact interdisciplinary synergies celebrated at this conference. As a member of the University System of Maryland and a recipient of the Carnegie Research College and University (RCU) designation, Bowie State is rapidly advancing its footprint in scholarly inquiry. Guided by our Boldly Forward strategic plan, we celebrate a university community that embraces big ideas, breaks barriers, and prepares the next generation of leaders, creators, and researchers to make a transformative impact far beyond our campus.

The Graduate School

The Graduate School at Bowie State University is an engine of discovery, driving innovation and meaningful change. Across our master's and doctoral programs, we empower emerging scholars to challenge the status quo, pushing the boundaries of research to solve real-world problems. By championing rigorous scholarship, interdisciplinary collaboration, and hands-on mentorship, we help students turn bold ideas into groundbreaking knowledge. At Bowie State, graduate education goes beyond the classroom; it is a launchpad for cultivating the researchers, professionals, and leaders who will shape the future and make a lasting impact.