

RIT Commencement May 8-9, 2026

Hello Graduates,

We are only 7 weeks away from Commencement Weekend - and it's time to share some exciting news!

RIT has just announced that the 2026 Commencement Speaker will be former NASA astronaut, physician, and educator, Mae Jemison!

Jemison will address graduates on Friday, May 8, 2026, at 10 a.m. in the Gordon Field House and Activities Center, as part of the RIT commencement festivities.



Mae Jemison, a former NASA astronaut, physician, educator, and the first woman of color to go into space, will address graduates at RIT's Academic Convocation on May 8.

Mae Jemison, a former NASA astronaut, physician, educator, and the first woman of color to go into space, will be the keynote speaker for Rochester Institute of Technology's [Academic Convocation](#) on May 8.

Jemison will also receive an Honorary Doctor of Science degree.

"We are fortunate and honored to be able to welcome Dr. Jemison as this year's Academic Convocation speaker," said RIT President Bill Sanders. "Dr. Jemison is a trailblazer, from her groundbreaking experiences at NASA to her medical research and mission to enhance STEM education, and beyond. She will undoubtedly inspire our graduates as they move on to their next adventure, to grasp every opportunity that comes their way, and to continue to be difference-makers in our world."

[Read more about the 2026 RIT Commencement Speaker here >](#)

Important: Order Your Regalia (Cap and Gown)

For regalia ordering information, please visit: buildaacademy.com/rit.

Order before Sun, Mar 29, 2026 - 11:59 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time)

For all regalia questions, or if you are a Ph.D. graduate, please contact Balfour directly by phone at 1-800-683-4771 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (CST), Monday-Friday or email customer_service@buildaacademy.com.

Gown Distribution Event Details:

Regalia will be distributed at Gene Polisseni Center-Door 3. Pre-ordered regalia can be picked up any date and time below.

Please note: *If you did not place an order, you can pick up only on Thursday, May 7th during hours noted below.*

Here is the schedule:

- Tuesday, May 5, 2026: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. (Interpreters on site from 11 a.m. -1 p.m. and 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.)
- Wednesday, May 6, 2026: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. (Interpreters on site from 11 a.m. -1 p.m. and 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.)
- Thursday, May 7, 2026: 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. (Interpreters on site from 11 a.m. -1 p.m. and 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.)

All regalia orders are shipped to RIT for you to pick up the week leading up to Commencement Weekend, unless you paid for the Ship-To-Home option (for a shipping fee of \$14.50).

For the most up-to-date information about RIT Commencement Weekend, visit rit.edu/commencement.

Thank you,

The Graduation/Events Team

Graduation@rit.edu

Make your Class Gift!

As a thank you, you will receive an **orange and black philanthropy cord** to wear during Commencement.



Make an Impact and Show Your Tiger Pride!