

# National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives



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## PRESS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release**

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### **NOBLE National President Gregory A. Thomas Delivers University of Maryland Eastern Shore Commencement Address**

*The Second Alumnus to Deliver a Spring Commencement Address in the Post War Era  
Friday, May 20th*



ALEXANDRIA, VA. -- National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE) National President Gregory A. Thomas delivered the annual commencement address for the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) on **Friday, May 20<sup>th</sup>** in the William P. Hytche Athletic Center.

Thomas, who graduated from UMES in 1982, was the second alumnus to deliver a spring commencement address at the university in the post-World War II era. Dr. Earl S. Richardson, class of 1965 and former president of Morgan State University, was the first. Thomas will join the list of notables such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Eleanor Roosevelt, Thurgood Marshall, Jackie Robinson and Bishop Desmond Tutu all of whom graced the UMES stage as commencement speakers.

Thomas earned a bachelor's degree in sociology from UMES, where he also was a record-setting sprinter on the track team. He is the inaugural recipient of the university's "Young Alumni" award and was elected to the UMES Athletics Hall of Fame. He also holds a master's degree in criminal justice from Long Island University's campus in his native Brooklyn.

Currently, Thomas serves as Senior Executive for Law Enforcement Operations for the Kings County, Brooklyn district attorney, the nation's third-largest public prosecutor's office. Thomas advises the district attorney and his executive staff on criminal justice and law enforcement policy and procedures, and is principal liaison to the New York City Police Department as well as local, state and federal law enforcement agencies conducting major investigations and operational matters.

In addition to serving as president to NOBLE's 3,000 international members, Thomas is also a member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police and of the American Society of Industrial Security. Thomas is among the nation's top emergency management and school-safety experts and author or co-author of several books including a Random House publication, "**Freedom from Fear: A Guide to Safety, Preparedness and the Threat of Terrorism.**" He has been interviewed by the New York Times, USA Today and U.S. News & World Report and has appeared on news broadcasts by the BBC, CNN, Fox News, MSNBC and NPR.

In his address, President Thomas spoke to the graduates of career and life goals stating, "as you begin your career, it matters that you have a plan of action for what you want to be and what you want to do in life." Thomas also encouraged UMES graduates to "evaluate the risks of every opportunity put before them and to not fear failure or the need to reinvent." In closing, Thomas invoked the inspirational stories of famed astronaut Ellison S. Onizuka and Civil Rights Leader Kwame Toure (Stokely Carmichael). You can read the full text of President Thomas' speech [here](#).

The UMES commencement ceremony awarded degrees to 470 students this year. Dr. Daniel M. Ashby and Dr. Claudia Baquet, well known and respected Maryland health educators, also received honorary degrees during the graduation exercises.

### **About the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives**

Since 1976, The National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE) has served as the conscience of law enforcement by being committed to justice by action. NOBLE represents over 3,000 members internationally, who are primarily African-American chief executive officers of law enforcement agencies at federal, state, county and municipal levels, other law enforcement administrators, and criminal justice practitioners. For more information, visit [www.noblenational.org](http://www.noblenational.org).