The Butler Medal is the highest honor conferred by the Butler University Alumni Association, recognizing individuals for a lifetime of distinguished service to either Butler or their local community while at the same time achieving a distinguished career in their chosen profession and attaining a regional or national reputation. Since 1959, it has recognized individuals who have helped immeasurably toward perpetuating the University as a great educational and cultural institution and have had, in the course of their lifetime, a profound influence on the course of Butler University.

**Butler Service Medal**

The Butler Service Medal, established by the Alumni Association in 2001, the second highest honor conferred by the Butler University Alumni Association, and is reserved for recognition of emeriti faculty or retired faculty and staff (alumnus or non-alumnus). The recipient will have achieved a lifetime of distinguished service to Butler University and/or the community. Recipients will have helped to shape the past and future successes of Butler University and therefore shown a profound influence.

**The Robert Todd Duncan Alumni Achievement Award**

The Robert Todd Duncan Alumni Achievement Award is granted to Butler University graduates or former students* whose outstanding personal and/or professional accomplishment brings honor and distinction to the University, and individual attainment and/or contributions for the betterment of society. The Robert Todd Duncan Alumni Achievement Award recognizes those who have earned their degree more than fifteen years prior to the presentation of the award.

Robert Todd Duncan ’25, made his operatic debut in Mascagni’s Cavalleria Rusticana at New York’s Mecca Temple in 1934. In 1935, George Gershwin personally selected Duncan to play the role of Porgy in the first staging of Porgy and Bess, a role he performed more than 1,800 times. His 1936 performance of the role resulted in the first desegregated performance at the National Theatre in Washington, DC. In 1945, he broke the color barrier, becoming the first African American to sing with a major white opera company in the role of Tonio in Leoncavallo’s Pagliacci at the New York City Opera Company. He sang at the White House for three different presidents, and taught voice at Howard University for more than fifty years. In 1983 he received the Alumni Achievement Award from Butler University.

**The Hilton Ultimus Brown Alumni Achievement Award**

The Hilton Ultimus Brown Alumni Achievement Award is granted to recent Butler University graduates or former students* whose outstanding personal and/or professional accomplishment brings honor and distinction to the University, and individual attainment and/or contributions for the betterment of society.

Hilton Ultimus Brown will always be known for keeping alive and shepherding to fruition the ambitious vision of a “new Butler.” Though he himself lived most of his life in Irvington, and had earned his undergraduate degree from Butler there in 1880 (and his MA in 1882), he knew the future of Butler was much bigger and demanded more growth than the small and constricted campus in Irvington could ever accommodate. His career achievements and service
to the University began when he was just a recent graduate. It was during his lifetime of service—
he served on the Board of Trustees for an incredible 71 years and was President of the board
from 1903 to 1956—that he saw his “big dream” become a reality when he led the relocation of
Butler from its old Irvington campus to the ten-times bigger Fairview Park. In his chosen
career, he was an award-winning newspaper journalist and Managing Editor at the
Indianapolis News for over seven decades and recipient of numerous awards, including the
Butler Medal.

**The Katharine Merrill Graydon Alumni Service Award**
The Katharine Merrill Graydon Alumni Service Award is granted to Butler University graduates
or former students* who have demonstrated a significant commitment of outstanding service to
the University ultimately assisting in perpetuating Butler as a great educational and cultural
institution. The Katharine Merrill Graydon Service Award recognizes those who have earned
their degree more than fifteen years prior to the presentation of the award.

Katharine Merrill Graydon came to Butler with a legacy. She was the granddaughter of the first
Treasurer of the State of Indiana, and the niece of Catharine Merrill, a Professor of English
Literature at Butler who was only the second female full professor in the US. She graduated from
Butler in 1878, and was a Professor of English Literature at the University from 1907 to 1930,
receiving an honorary doctorate of literature in 1928. Graydon served as the Alumni Secretary
and Editor of the Alumnal Quarterly from its first edition in 1922 until her retirement in 1929,
when she was named Professor Emerita. During World War I, she maintained correspondence
with Butler students and alumni serving on the Western Front. She compiled a volume of these
letters, including an account of Butler men who had served in the Civil War and the Spanish–
American War, and helped raise funds for memorials honoring Butler’s war dead of the Civil War
and World War I.

**The Joseph Irwin Sweeney Alumni Service Award**
The Joseph Irwin Sweeney Alumni Service Award is granted to recent Butler University
graduates or former students* who have demonstrated a significant commitment of outstanding
service to the University ultimately assisting in perpetuating Butler as a great educational and
cultural institution.

Joseph Irwin Sweeney served the University as Editor of The Collegian for two years, Editor-in-
Chief of the College Annual, Manager of the football team, Manager and Soloist of the Glee
Club, and Secretary of the Indiana Oratorical Association. As a freshman, he was selected by
area students to serve as Chairman of the city’s annual celebration honoring Washington’s
birthday. During the ceremony, he gave a speech that captivated the audience and inspired a
column in the Indianapolis Journal. At the time of his untimely drowning death in the summer
of 1900, he was only 19 years old, yet was about to enter his senior year. Joseph Sweeney
accomplished an incredible amount as a student in an abbreviated college career.
BUTLER ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AWARD RECIPIENTS
(PAST FIVE YEARS)

Butler Medal
- Tom King ’66 (2020)
- Craig E. Fenneman ’71 (2019)
- John B. Dunn ’77 (2018)
- Norman Wilkens ’57 (2017)
- John Hargrove ’69 (2016)

Butler Service Medal
- Dr. James Berry (2020)
- Dr. H. Marshall Dixon (2019)
- Dr. Jeanne Hawkins VanTyle ’74 MS ’80 (2018)
- Dr. Robert Grechesky (2017)
- George W. Geib (2016)

The Robert Todd Duncan Alumni Achievement Award
- Wendi Thomas ’93 (2020)
- Michele McConnell ’93 (2019)
- Hoagland C. Elliott ’57 (2018)
- Wayne Burris ’77 (2017)
- Jennifer Christensen ’94 (2016)

The Hilton Ultimus Brown Alumni Achievement Award
- Brandon Gaudin ’06 (2020)
- LCDR Jennifer A. Cockrill ’04 (2019)
- Adam B. Hill, M.D. ’03 (2018)
- Michael Hole ’08 (2017)
- Shawn M. Gage ’04 (2016)

The Katharine Merrill Graydon Alumni Service Award
- Mary Shaw ’93 (2020)
- James M. Bagnoli ’75 (2019)
- Julie Russell Dilts ’92 (2018)
- Kevin McDevitt ’77 (2017)
- Maribeth Zay Fischer ’74 (2016)

The Joseph Irwin Sweeney Alumni Service Award
- Michael Bennett ’09 (2020)
- Marc A. Williams ’07 (2019)
- Kyle S. Delaney ’03 (2018)
- Becky Ruby-Wojtowicz ’05 (2017)
- Amy N. Lenell ’07 (2016)

A full list of past award recipients can be found at www.butler.edu/alumniawards
BUTLER UNIVERSITY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
Award Recipient Nomination Form

Name of Nominee: _______________________________________

Award: ________________________________________________

Butler Affiliations: _______________________________________

Supportive Information (reason/s for nominating individual):
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

Nominator’s Name________________________________________Date __________________

Submission Deadline: January 24
• Submit online or complete the Awards Recipient Nomination Form
• Nominations are considered for two years

(Nominations are accepted year-round. Nominations received by the deadline will be considered for awards recognized the following Homecoming weekend. Nominations received after the deadline will be considered the following year. Nominations are considered for two years. Any additional supplemental information on your nomination should be included.

Completed forms should be sent to: Alumni and Parent Programs, Butler University, 4600 Sunset Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46208. Please direct any questions to (317) 940-9946 or alumni@butler.edu