Commencement Speakers

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USF St. Petersburg Commencement Speakers

GRADUATION CELEBRATION

Graduation Celebration was a ceremony-dinner-dance held annually to honor “Candidates for Graduation” from USFSP. Guest speakers were selected by the event committee and members of the graduating class. Student awards were given at this event.

Graduation Celebration evolved into a post-Commencement Reception once the official Commencement for USF St. Petersburg was established in 1982. Graduation Celebration was continued well into the 2000s, but did not feature a guest speaker.

March 18, 1971 No speaker
1972 No event
June 8, 1973 PROF. ROBERT HALL, English
June 7, 1974 PROF. ROBERT HALL, English
June 15, 1975 DR. DANIEL WELLS, English
June 11, 1976 PROF. HARRY J. SCHALEMAN, JR., Geography
June 10, 1977 PROF. DAVID KENERSON, Business
June 8, 1979 DR. DAVID R. CARR, History
June 13, 1980 DICK BOTHWELL, staff writer, St. Petersburg Times
June 12, 1981 PROF. HAMILTON STIRLING, Business
May 1, 1982 PROF. HARRIET DEER, English

COMMENCEMENT

May 1, 1982 First USFSP Commencement
CLEVELAND AMORY, noted author
April 30, 1983 BARBARA NEWELL, Chancellor, State University System
April 28, 1984 ROY BLOUNT, JR., noted author
April 27, 1985 BARBARA NEWELL, Chancellor, State University System
May 3, 1986  EUGENE PATTERSON, Chairman of the Board and CEO, Times Publishing Company  
May 2, 1987  LOWELL E. DAVIS, Campus Dean (CEO of USFSP)  
April 30, 1988  CHARLES B. REED, Chancellor, State University System  
April 30, 1989  ANDREW H. HINES, JR., Chairman of Florida Power Corp.  
April 29, 1990  LESTER W. TUTTLE, USFSP Founding Dean (CEO)  
April 28, 1991  LEANDER J. SHAW JR., Chief Justice, Florida Supreme Court  
May 3, 1992  JACOB NEUSNER, Distinguished Research Professor, Religious Studies  
May 5, 1993  C.W. (BILL) YOUNG, U.S. Representative, District 9  

Dec. 16, 1993  First December Commencement  
SISTER MARGARET FREEMAN, Founder of St. Petersburg Free Clinic  
May 4, 1994  JAY BLACK, USF Poynter Jamison Eminent Scholar of Media Ethics and Press Policy  

(Spring 1994 Commencement at USF Tampa)  
DOUG JAMERSON, State Representative and USFSP alumnus, was awarded the President's Fellow Medallion at USF Tampa.  

Dec. 15, 1994  DAVID FISCHER, Mayor, City of St. Petersburg  
May 9, 1995  J. HOWARD HINESLEY, Superintendent of Pinellas County Schools  
Dec. 18, 1995  HARM J. de BLIJ, University Scientist and Scholar in Geography, Distinguished Professor of Geography at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service  
May 5, 1996  PETER A. FRENCH, USF Marie E. and E. Leslie Cole Endowed Chair in Ethics
Dec. 16, 1996  BOB GILDER, Civil Rights Activist and Humanitarian

May 4, 1997  PETER RUDY WALLACE, Former Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives


May 3, 1998  GOLIATH J. DAVIS III, Chief of Police, St. Petersburg Police Department

Dec. 14, 1998  ANN HENDERSON, Executive Director, MacArthur Foundation, Former Executive Director, Florida Humanities Council,

May 2, 1999  JACOB NEUSNER, USF Distinguished Research Professor of Religious Studies


Dec. 13, 1999  GUS STAVROS, USF Foundation Chair and Capital Campaign Co-chair; Chairman, PELAM Investments

May 7, 2000  JUDGE RAYMOND O. GROSS, Sixth Judicial Circuit: President, USF Alumni Association

Dec. 18, 2000  DR. JOHN HOPE FRANKLIN, historian

**COMMENCEMENT SPEAKERS were generally eliminated beginning in May 2001**


Prepared by Sudsy Tschiderer
6 August 2015