

## INSPIRED TO LEAD

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**Celebrating Rivier's transformative mission and first Psy.D. graduates at Commencement 2017 (May 6, 2017)**



Photos by Jodie Andruskevich

Rivier University celebrated its 82<sup>nd</sup> Commencement on May 6, 2017, awarding **949 degrees**—its largest graduating class to date—to doctoral, post-master's, master's, bachelor's, and associate degree graduates.



During the ceremony, Rivier recognized the first recipients of its Doctor of Psychology in Counseling and School Psychology (Psy.D.) degree. This terminal degree allows graduates to obtain licensure for independent practice and to pursue careers as psychologists and school psychologists in a variety of settings. Rivier University was the first institution in New Hampshire to offer a combined doctoral program in counseling

and school psychology, and it is one of only several similar programs in the country.

Highlighting Rivier's mission to transform hearts and minds to serve the world, the University honored **Peter Kelleher**, President and CEO of Harbor Homes and the Partnership for Successful Living, with an honorary doctor of humane letters for his humanitarian work as an advocate for the needs of low-income community members, veterans, and other vulnerable populations.

### Rivier awards honorary Doctor of Humane Letters to Peter James Kelleher



Sister Paula Marie Buley, IHM (left) and Chair of the Board of Trustees Dianne Mercier (right) hood Peter James Kelleher.

In recognition of his inspirational vision, commitment to service, and exceptional leadership in addressing basic human issues facing society, especially the plight of the poor and powerless, Rivier presented Peter James Kelleher an honorary degree at the 2017 Commencement ceremony.

Mr. Kelleher's life's work exemplifies the University's mission of transforming hearts and minds to serve the world. The President and CEO of Harbor Homes and the Partnership for Successful Living, he has been a humanitarian and a strong advocate for those less fortunate.

Throughout his extraordinary 35-year career, he has overseen six non-profit agencies offering more than 80 programs in the state that provide access to housing, healthcare, education, and employment to those challenged by mental illness, substance abuse, or homelessness.

The recipient of numerous awards and recognitions for his contributions to the community, he has been presented with the *NH Business Review* Excellence in Nonprofit Award and named the 2015 Humanitarian of the Year by *The Telegraph*. He was nominated by Senator Jeanne Shaheen and subsequently appointed as the New England representative to the Department of Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee on Homeless Veterans. He advises the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs on homelessness issues on a federal level. He also serves as a Board member of the National Health Care for the Homeless Council.

**Mr. Kelleher** delivered the address, reflecting on the privilege he has had to serve in the non-profit arena. "Being a part of the non-profit environment in any capacity creates the opportunity to maximize our hearts and minds to benefit those most vulnerable, and allows us to go home at night with feelings of accomplishment and fulfillment that are immeasurable," says Kelleher. "The mission of Harbor Homes and the Partnership for Successful Living's culture—to interact with all of our community members with dignity, respect, and equality—is the bedrock in the delivery of services and the betterment of life."

Kelleher encouraged graduates to consider pursuing a rewarding career with a non-profit organization and appealed to all in attendance to use the 'power within us' to improve lives, reignite hope, and influence change.

**Sister Paula Marie Buley, IHM**, Rivier's President, shared well wishes with the graduates and welcomed them to a community of more than 20,000 alumni. "Congratulations to all our graduates of the Class of 2017," said Sister Paula. "This is a singular achievement in your life and will serve as a strong foundation of the core mission of Rivier University to transform hearts and minds to serve the world."



Speaking on behalf of Rivier's undergraduate programs, **Elaine Boles**, Bachelor of Science in Nursing, Summa Cum Laude, of Bedford, New Hampshire, addressed her fellow graduates and thanked the entire



University community for supporting the Class of 2017's educational goals. "No matter where we go from here, Rivier University has prepared us, and we are ready," she said. "It is time to share our education and knowledge with others as we continue our alma mater's commitment to serve the world."



Student speaker for Rivier's graduate programs, **Christina Anderson**, M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction, of Nashua, New Hampshire, acknowledged Rivier's faculty for providing the best instruction and wisdom they had to offer. "We are surrounded by professors and an administration who care about us and want to see us succeed," says Anderson. "Because of them, our academic experience was, and still is, incredibly inspiring," she added. "We are ready to make this real world of ours a better place for our students, for our patients, for our clients, and for ourselves."



Associate Vice President for Student Success **Dr. Regina Shearer** closed the Commencement ceremony with a performance of an original song, "Rise Up," sung to the tune of Andra Day's song. Each year, Dr. Shearer chooses a popular song and writes Rivier-themed lyrics for the graduating class. "And you'll rise up, transformed in heart and in mind," Dr. Shearer sang. "Yes, you'll rise up, you've been equipped for these times. Yes, you'll rise up, and be proud to be a Rivier Grad." ■

