

RIVIER CELEBRATES GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT, HOME IN NASHUA AT FIRST COMMENCEMENT AS A UNIVERSITY

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Office of Marketing & Communications, Rivier University

Rivier University celebrated its 78th commencement today—its first since officially becoming a University on July 1 of last year—at the Tsongas Center in Lowell, Mass. The University awarded 705 degrees to doctoral, masters, bachelors, and associate degree graduates.

True to its core mission of ‘transforming hearts and minds to serve the world,’ Rivier highlighted both its global connections and its home in Nashua, N.H.

During the ceremony, honorary degrees were presented to three individuals—distinguished international scholar **Dr. Philip Altbach**, director of the Center for International Higher Education in the Lynch School of Education at Boston College; **the Honorable Donnalee Lozeau**, Mayor of the city of Nashua and the home of Rivier University; and **Dr. Jamison Hoff**, recently retired chair of the Rivier Board of Trustees.

Dr. Altbach delivered the Commencement address, celebrating the importance of global engagement as the University recognized the far-reaching influence of his scholarship and service. “The great universities of the 21st century will be those that have a global vision,” Altbach said. “The challenge for us as graduates and citizens is to understand the globalized world and to engage with it...we need, in a democracy, to have informed citizens.”

Established in 1995, the Center for International Higher Education is a global resource for information and analysis about higher education. In addition to his role as director, Dr. Altbach is J. Donald Monan, S.J. University Professor at Boston College. He was the 2004-2006 Distinguished Scholar Leader for the New Century Scholars initiative of the Fulbright program.

Since the transition to Rivier University, the institution’s core mission has been sharpened by initiatives in global engagement and outreach to international students. In addition, new academic programs in global studies and transnational security studies will enhance the ability of the University’s students and faculty to connect to the world in the classroom and beyond. “Our transition to Rivier University provides the opportunity to reintroduce ourselves to the world with a renewed focus on academic distinction, global engagement, and student leadership,” says **Sister Paula**. “Nashua is our home, and the world is our classroom.”

In recognition of the importance of local community and its home in Nashua, Rivier presented an honorary degree to Mayor Donnalee Lozeau. This presentation highlights the University’s commitment to serving as an economic development partner and providing community service opportunities for students to enhance the quality of life enjoyed by the citizens of Nashua.

The University also recognized the legacy of leadership and service of Dr. Jamison Hoff, who recently concluded a 10 year term as chair of Rivier’s Board of Trustees. In addition to obtaining “University” status and launching two doctoral programs under her leadership, Rivier successfully completed its first capital campaign and received the largest gift in its history—a \$2 million gift from the Conway family of Nashua to renovate and expand the Regina Library. The University also expanded and renovated the Muldoon Fitness Center under Dr. Hoff’s leadership.

Christopher M. Rochon, of Hudson, N.H., who received a bachelor's degree in biology with a minor in chemistry, spoke on behalf of Rivier's undergraduate programs, tying Rivier's focus on global engagement into his remarks.

"Together, we are here today to rejoice in something that is both an end and a beginning," Rochon said. "Together, we are here to celebrate Rivier's first commencement ceremony as a university. And together, we recognize the hard work of seven hundred and five students that got them to this point, here, in front of all of you, ready to graduate...This is just the beginning for Rivier University leaving its footprint on the global community, and although this may be the end of our time at Riv, it is just the start of our chance to serve its greater purpose."

Student speaker for Rivier's graduate programs, **Deborah L. Jarvis, M.Ed.**, of Salem, N.H., touched on the importance of continually setting goals for oneself.

"Like many of my fellow graduates, this degree means the completion of several years of hard work and sacrifice," Jarvis said. "I would like to leave you with one final thought, and this is something that has stood me in good stead over the years," she concluded at the end of her remarks. "Always follow your dreams...Always look inside yourself and find the strength to say 'I can'...Today, I am completing one dream, and looking forward to finding the next." ■

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