

RIVIER UNIVERSITY TO RECOGNIZE THE IMPACT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL SERVICE AT COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY IN MAY

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In celebration of its 80th anniversary, Rivier University will recognize the transformational service of two outstanding individuals at its Commencement ceremony on May 10, 2014. The University will present honorary degrees to **James T. Brett**, President and Chief Executive Officer of The New England Council, and devoted Rivier administrator **Sister Cecile Gamache, pm**.

“In a year in which we celebrate our 80th anniversary and reflect on the values of ‘transforming hearts and minds to serve the world’ as well as the transformative impact of service on individuals and society, it is fitting that we honor two individuals who have made service to others the focus of their life’s work,” says Sister Paula Marie Buley, IHM, President.

James T. Brett will serve as the University’s Commencement speaker and will be awarded an honorary doctorate of humane letters in recognition of his outstanding collaborative efforts to bring people and resources together to improve the New England region.

“As Rivier’s curriculum encourages students to explore questions such as ‘Who is My Neighbor?’ we are privileged to introduce them to a leader who values service, the dignity of the human person, and collaboration, all hallmarks of Rivier’s academic programs,” added Sister Paula.

Established in 1925 as an alliance of schools, hospitals, corporations, and other private organizations throughout New England, The New England Council promotes economic growth and a high quality of life in the region. Appointed to the organization’s chief leadership role in 1996, Mr. Brett has been a leading voice in advocating for public policy issues such as healthcare, education, financial services, and energy throughout New England and Washington, D.C. His success at The New England Council follows an impressive 16 year tenure as a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives where he consistently brought together constituencies to create economic opportunity for the Commonwealth’s citizens and businesses.

The recipient of numerous awards and recognition for outstanding public service, he was named the 2011 New Englander of the Year in recognition of his extraordinary commitment, leadership, and contributions to the economy and quality of life in the region.

A tireless advocate for the physically and mentally challenged, he has been recognized for his humanitarian work and his national contributions to the field of intellectual disability. He was appointed by former President George W. Bush to serve as a member of the President’s Commission for People with Intellectual Disabilities and subsequently appointed as Chairman under the leadership of President Barack Obama.

In addition to numerous honorary degrees, Mr. Brett earned his bachelor’s degree from American University and master’s degree in public administration from both Suffolk University and the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

The University will also present an honorary doctorate of humane letters to Sister Cecile Gamache, pm in recognition of her exemplary service to the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary and to Rivier.

“We acknowledge the fundamental and longstanding service and vision of the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary as embodied by Sister Cecile Gamache, pm,” says Sister Paula Marie Buley. Sister Cecile retired from her role as Rivier’s Assistant Vice President of Finance and Operations in 2011,

TO RECOGNIZE THE IMPACT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL SERVICE

completing forty years of dedicated service that has contributed to Rivier's financial vitality and solid position within the competitive higher education marketplace.

A member of the Rivier community since 1950, she has provided exceptional leadership through her role as a member of the Board of Trustees and as a member of the Corporation, providing wise financial counsel while always looking forward with a vision for Rivier's future.

"Sister Cecile's financial expertise guided Rivier through many decades of growth, the conversion to computerized systems, the development of banking and investment policies, and the construction of several campus buildings," says Sister Paula Marie Buley. "She leaves behind a legacy marked by transformative service and collaboration with administration, faculty, staff, and students that has created Rivier's solid foundation and positioned us for future development."

At the heart of Sister Cecile's wise financial counsel is a commitment to Rivier's mission of 'transforming hearts and minds to serve the world' and a consistent effort to reach higher and better following Rivier's motto 'altiora et meliora.'

Sister Cecile earned her bachelor of arts in mathematics from Rivier in 1954 and her master of arts in mathematics from Boston College in 1970. She conducted post-graduate studies at the University of Rhode Island and at Notre-Dame University.

The Commencement Ceremony will take place at the Tsongas Center in Lowell, Mass. at 10 a.m. The University anticipates awarding degrees to graduates from the School of Undergraduate Studies and the School of Graduate Studies, including graduates of the University's Doctorate of Education in Leadership and Learning. ■

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