

## **RIVIER UNIVERSITY RECOGNIZES THE IMPACT OF LEADERSHIP AND PERSEVERANCE AT 80TH COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY ON MAY 9, 2015**

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*Photo: Dr. Karen A. Daley, nurse leader, public health advocate, and educator, addresses the Class of 2015 and distinguished guests at the 2015 Commencement ceremony.*

**R**ivier University celebrated its 80th commencement today at the Tsongas Center in Lowell, Massachusetts. The University awarded 799 degrees to doctoral, master's, bachelor's, and associate degree graduates.

During the ceremony, Rivier honored Commencement speaker Karen A. Daley, Ph.D., RN, FAAN with an honorary doctorate of humane letters in recognition of her eminent career as a nurse, public health advocate, and educator. Serving as a front-line caregiver and senior staff nurse for 25 years and advancing to leadership roles, including President of the American Nurses Association in which she

represented the interest of the nation's 3.1 million registered nurses, Dr. Daley has had a far-reaching impact on the nursing profession and the field of healthcare. After a tragic accident in which she was co-infected with HIV and Hepatitis C by a workplace needlestick injury, Dr. Daley's career transitioned from practice to prevention. She is a vocal, nationally recognized advocate for legislation mandating the use of safer needle devices in healthcare practice settings.

"Dr. Daley's life's work and message have inspired our University community," says Sister Paula Marie Buley, IHM, President. "Her resilience, passion and commitment to others remind us that transforming the world is a privilege and that education is a pathway to service."

Addressing graduates on the importance of self-awareness, courage, and finding meaning and purpose in their lives, Dr. Daley shared, "When life takes an unexpected turn, like it did in mine, when life seems incredibly unfair and beyond control, understand that that is the nature of life. It is how you deal with those difficult times that matters most and reveals the most about who you are as a person. Be your own hero. Live your life with a sense of authenticity, passion, courage, and purpose. Those will be the things that define you in your life."

Named as one of the "100 Most Influential People in Healthcare" and one of the "Top 25 Women in Healthcare" by Modern Healthcare, Dr. Daley has been recognized with numerous awards for her outstanding leadership and excellence in practice. She was designated a 'Living Legend' by the Massachusetts Association of Registered Nurses for her significant contributions to the nursing profession, and was inducted as a fellow into the American Academy of Nursing for her advocacy work. She holds a Ph.D. and a master of science degree in nursing from Boston College and a master's in public health from Boston University School of Public Health.

Dr. Daley serves as a living example of Rivier's mission; a mission that has been sharpened by significant initiatives in nursing, public health and global engagement. The University is a leader in the education of nursing and healthcare professionals, offering degrees from the associate to the doctoral level. Rivier has prepared the largest number of nurses in the state of New Hampshire and recently launched bachelor's and master's degrees in public health. In 2014, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) awarded Rivier one of only 15 national Nursing Workforce Diversity grants throughout the country.

Speaking on behalf of Rivier's undergraduate programs, Daniel Thomas Varela, B.A. in Human Development/General Special Education/Early Childhood Education, Magna Cum Laude, of Milford, New Hampshire, spoke about transformation and leadership on behalf of Rivier's undergraduate programs. "Transforming hearts and minds to serve the world' is no longer simply a quote on paper or an abstract ideal. It's the very reality we have come here to celebrate," Varela said. "I think the common thread we all share is that we will walk across this stage today entirely transformed. We will begin our lives as teachers, nurses, police officers, business professionals, scientists, historians, and other pillars of the community."

Student speaker for Rivier's graduate programs, Olivia Aubrey Jones, M.S. Nursing, of Manchester, New Hampshire, encouraged students to stay true to Rivier. "With your advanced degrees you are now all promoted to leaders, whether formal or informal. I leave you all with a quote from Albert Einstein to consider as you move forward. 'Try to become not a man of success, but try rather to become a man of value.'" ■

**[View the 2015 Commencement photo gallery:](#)**

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