

# State System universities to hold fall commencements

## *Ceremonies scheduled for weekend of December 15-17*

**Harrisburg** – Pennsylvania’s State System of Higher Education universities will hold their fall commencement ceremonies beginning Dec. 15 and continuing throughout the weekend on the various campuses.

Outstanding students, alumni and faculty are among the scheduled speakers who will address the new graduates, their families and other guests who will attend the programs. Details of each of the programs follow:

**Bloomsburg** – Janey Reynolds Bodenman, professor of communication studies, and Karl Kapp, professor of instructional technology, will address undergraduates in separate ceremonies to be held Dec. 16 in Haas Center for the Arts, Mitrani Hall. Bodenman will speak at 10 a.m. to graduates from the Colleges of Education and Liberal Arts, while Kapp will speak at 2:30 p.m. to graduates of the Zeigler College of Business and the College of Science and Technology.

Students who earned the highest grade point average in their college also will be recognized during both undergraduate ceremonies. Those earning top honors are Brandon Christopher Toterj of Kulpmont, a criminal justice major in the College of Liberal Arts; Ariel Marie Harro of Shickshinny, early childhood education PK-4, College of Education; Emily Marie Baker of New Columbia, accounting and finance, Zeigler College of Business; and Krystan Joy Mackert of Berwick, exercise science, College of Science and Technology.

Graduate degrees will be awarded at a separate ceremony to be held at 6 p.m., Dec. 15, also in Haas Center.

**California** – Cal U. alumnus Jack Zduriencik, who worked in Major League Baseball for more than 30 years, will address graduate students at 7 p.m., Dec. 15, and undergraduates at 10 a.m., Dec. 16. Both ceremonies will be held in the university’s Convocation Center.

Zduriencik held scouting and front-office positions with the New York Mets, Pittsburgh Pirates, Los Angeles Dodgers and Milwaukee Brewers before serving as executive vice president and general manager of baseball operations for the Seattle Mariners from 2008 to 2015. He now works for AT&T SportsNet in Pittsburgh and KDKA-FM radio as a contributor to the Pirates’ pre-game and post-game shows.

**Clarion** – Curtis Zimmerman (’79), founder and chief executive officer of The Zimmerman Agency, will speak at 1 p.m., Dec. 16, in Tippin Gymnasium. Eric Zavinski, who will receive a Bachelor of Science degree in communication, will be the student speaker.

The Zimmerman Agency is a marketing communications firm whose clients include The Ritz-Carlton Company, Cooper Tires, Hunter Fans, Gold Toe Socks, Hard Rock Hotels, Pilot Pens, Aruba Tourism Authority and Firehouse Subs.

**East Stroudsburg** -- Brandon Igdalsky, managing director for event marketing and promotion for NASCAR, will be the keynote speaker for ceremonies beginning at 10 a.m., Dec. 16, in Koehler Fieldhouse. Student speakers will be Melissa Dowches, who will be receiving a Master of Education degree in reading; and Megan Reinert, who will be receiving a Bachelor of Science degree in communication sciences and disorders.

Igdalsky is responsible for oversight of the at-track experience throughout NASCAR's three national touring series. The eldest grandson of Pocono Raceway founders Dr. Joseph and Dr. Rose Mattioli, Igdalsky is the former president and CEO of Pocono Raceway.

**Edinboro** – Laura Bequeath, who graduated Summa Cum Laude from the university's Honors Program this summer, will address undergraduates at a ceremony scheduled to begin at 10 a.m., Dec. 16, in McComb Fieldhouse. Bequeath of Buffalo, N.Y., earned a Bachelor of Arts in individualized studies. Additional speakers will include Savannah F. Anderton, who serves as the student trustee on the Edinboro University Council of Trustees, and Scott Irlbacher, president of the Edinboro University Alumni Association Board of Directors.

Rebecca D. Leonard of Jeannette, who will receive a Master of Arts degree in college counseling, will speak at the ceremony for graduate students at 2 p.m. in Louis C. Cole Auditorium in Memorial Hall.

**Indiana** – Distinguished University Professor Dr. Teresa Shellenbarger will speak Dec. 16 at separate ceremonies for graduate and undergraduate students. The graduate ceremony will be held at 9:30 a.m. in Fisher Auditorium; the ceremony for undergraduates, at 1 p.m., in the Kovalchick Convention and Athletic Complex.

**Kutztown** – Students Kamall Hassan and Amandamae Baettcher and art education professor Dr. Heather Leah Ryerson Fountain will address graduates at 9 a.m., Dec. 16, in O'Pake Fieldhouse.

Hassan of Millerstown will graduate with a Master of Arts degree in English. He also earned his undergraduate degree from Kutztown in 2012 and has worked as a language arts teacher at West Perry Middle School in Elliottsburg since 2013. Baettcher of Columbia, N.J., will receive a Bachelor of Arts degree in anthropology with a minor in sociology. She completed her degree in five semesters and is a member of the Honors Program and Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society. Fountain is a professor of art education and crafts at KU, where she has served as the undergraduate art education program coordinator since 2009.

**Lock Haven** – Cynthia D. Shapira, chairwoman of the Board of Governors of Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education, will speak at commencement ceremonies set to begin at 2 p.m., Dec. 16, in Thomas Field House.

Shapira is president of the David S. and Karen A. Shapira Foundation and is a community activist. She is chair of the Greater Pittsburgh Jewish Federation and vice chair of Jewish Federations of North America. She sits on the Governor's Advisory Board for Education and Workforce Development and previously served on the Pennsylvania Women's Commission under Governor Tom Corbett.

**Mansfield** – J. Dennis Murray, professor emeritus of psychology, will be the speaker at the university's 153rd commencement to begin at 11 a.m., Dec. 16, in Decker Gymnasium.

Murray retired in 2015 after serving on the Mansfield faculty for 37 years. As a professor, he taught courses in counseling, leadership studies, rural community psychology, prevention of mental illness, death and dying studies, and student professional development. In addition, Murray placed and supervised students conducting internships in over 200 schools and community organizations.

**Millersville** – Lancaster Mayor Rick Gray will address undergraduates at 2 p.m., Dec. 17, in Pucillo Gymnasium.

Gray has served three terms as mayor of Lancaster. He also has been president of the Lancaster County Bar Association and Pennsylvania Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers.

**Shippensburg** – Alumnus John Clinton, retired president and CEO of the Shippensburg University Foundation, will address undergraduates at 11 a.m., Dec. 16, in Heiges Field House.

Clinton retired this fall after leading the foundation for 34 years. During his tenure, the foundation grew from \$1 million to over \$88 million in total assets, and was frequently nationally ranked in the top three percent among all Masters Level II public universities for fundraising.

Carlos Suarez, who earned a master's degree in geoenvironmental studies from Shippensburg in 1997, will address graduate students at 7 p.m., Dec. 15, in the H. Ric Luhrs Performing Arts Center. Suarez is the state conservationist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service in California and is serving as the lead post-hurricane assistance coordinator to Puerto Rico.

**Slippery Rock** – Interim President Philip Way will provide remarks during the program, which will be held at 11 a.m., Dec. 16, in Morrow Fieldhouse.

**West Chester** – Distinguished alumna Rudine Sims Bishop, professor emerita at Ohio State University, and Eli Kahn, founder and president of the E. Kahn Development Corporation, will address undergraduates at separate morning and afternoon ceremonies scheduled for Dec. 17 in Hollinger Fieldhouse.

Bishop, an expert in and author of children's literature, will speak during the 10 a.m. ceremony for graduates of the Colleges of Arts & Humanities, Education & Social Work and Sciences & Mathematics and the School of Music. Kahn will

speak at 1:30 p.m. to graduates in the Colleges of Business & Public Management and Health Sciences and those in Interdisciplinary Studies.

Ravi Amble, founder, president and chief executive officer of Suquino Inc., will address those receiving graduate degrees, at 10 a.m., Dec. 16, in Hollinger Field House. Amble has founded and owned multiple businesses in the medical and information technology sectors.

Cheyney University does not hold a fall commencement program.

*Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education is the largest provider of higher education in the Commonwealth, enrolling more than 100,000 degree-seeking students and thousands more in certificate and other career-development programs. Collectively, the 14 universities that comprise the State System offer more than 2,300 degree and certificate programs in more than 530 academic areas. Nearly 520,000 State System university alumni live in Pennsylvania.*

*The State System universities are Bloomsburg, California, Cheyney, Clarion, East Stroudsburg, Edinboro, Indiana, Kutztown, Lock Haven, Mansfield, Millersville, Shippensburg, Slippery Rock and West Chester Universities of Pennsylvania. The universities also operate branch campuses in Oil City (Clarion), Freeport and Punxsutawney (IUP), and Clearfield (Lock Haven), and offer classes and programs at several regional centers, including the Dixon University Center in Harrisburg and in Center City in Philadelphia.*