DSU Announces its 2011 Commencement Keynote Speakers

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Delaware State University will hold its 119th Commencement exercises in four separate indoor ceremonies May 21-22 in which about 600 graduates will celebrate the completion of their degrees.

A separate Commencement exercise for master and doctoral degree graduates will be held on Saturday, May 21, and three separate undergraduate Commencements will be held on Sunday, May 22. The Commencement will be closed to only those having tickets provided by graduates.

Headlining an outstanding trio of keynote speakers will be hip-hop artist and actress Queen Latifah, who will speak at the Sunday, 3 p.m. Commencement. In addition, journalist and activist Jeff Johnson will be the keynote speaker at the 9 a.m. and 12 noon Commencements; and DSU alumna Quincy Lucas, a domestic violence prevention advocate, will give the keynote address at the Saturday 2 p.m. Commencement for master and doctoral students. (Bio info is found on the subsequent pages of this release).

Commencement schedule is as follows:

Saturday, 2 p.m. – Education & Humanities Theatre
Keynote speaker – Quincy Lucas
All graduating masters and doctoral students

Sunday, 9 a.m. – Memorial Hall Gymnasium*
Keynote speaker –Jeff Johnson
The College of Agriculture & Related Sciences
The College of Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Technology

Sunday, 12 p.m. – Memorial Hall Gymnasium*
Keynote speaker – Jeff Johnson
College of Business
College of Education, Health and Public Policy

Sunday, 3 p.m. – Memorial Hall Gymnasium*
Keynote speaker – Queen Latifah
College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

* -- Bachelor's degree graduates only.

In addition, the Department of Nursing will hold its traditional Nurses Pinning Ceremony at 6 p.m. Saturday, May 21 in the Education & Humanities Theatre.

The Commencement Speakers

Queen Latifah

As a hip-hop artist, television and film actress, recording label president, author and entrepreneur, Queen Latifah has blossomed into a one-woman entertainment conglomerate.

She is a 1994 Grammy Award-winning rapper for her hit "Go Ahead" and has also garnered six other Grammy nominations for her music works. As an actress she has starred in more than 27 feature films – including her Oscar-nominated performance in the 2002 *Chicago* – as well as numerous other television movies and sitcoms and dramas. A number of the movies were the result of her production company Flavor Unit Entertainment. Ms. Latifah has also authored two books: *Ladies First: Revelations of a Strong Woman*, as well as her latest released in 2010, *Put on Your Crown: Life Lessons from the Queen.*

Jeff Johnson

She also serves as the co-chair of the Lancelot H. Owens Scholarship Foundation, Inc. which provides scholarships to students who excel scholastically, but are limited in financial resources.

Jeff Johnson

As a Washington, D.C.-based award-winning investigative journalist, social activist and political commentator, Jeff Johnson's work to inspire the next generation of leaders has established him as an authentic voice for change and a trailblazing social entrepreneur.

Mr. Johnson is a MSNBC contributor and White House correspondent for *The Grio*, an African-American website owned by NBC. He is the only U.S reporter to obtain a post-inauguration interview with current Liberia President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Africa's first-ever elected female head of state. As a BET Network personality, he received the National Association for Black Journalists' 2008 Salute to Excellence Award for his "Life & Death in Darfur" segment that was broadcast on his "Jeff Johnson Reports" series.

Over the last decade, Mr. Johnson has merged the worlds of politics and popular culture as he has served as a senior advisor for Media and Youth Outreach for People for the American Way, as national director of the Youth & College Division of the NAACP, as well as vice president of the Russell Simmons Hip-Hop Network Action Network. In 2009 Mr. Johnson released his first book, *Everything I'm Not Made Me Everything I Am: Discovering your Personal Best.*

Quincy Lucas

The founder and president of Witney's Lights, Inc. Ms. Lucas is a two-time graduate of DSU, where she earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Elementary Education and a Master of Arts Degree in Curriculum and Instruction.

It is through her advocacy for domestic violence prevention that Ms. Lucas has made her mark on the world. The tragic 2003 domestic violence death of her sister, Witney, in Baltimore propelled Ms. Lucas into that advocacy and resulted in her establishment of the non-profit Witney's Lights, through which she has emerged as a leader on that issue. Her domestic violence prevention work brought her in then-U.S. Sen. Joseph Biden, Jr.'s camp, as her advocacy was used to help educate Americans about his enacted Violence Against Women Act.

Quincy Lucas

Ms. Lucas has also played a significant role in the ushering of the Obama administration. She gave the official nomination of former Sen. Biden as vice president, and later accompanied then President-elect Barack Obama on his Whistle Stop Train Tour on his way to his inauguration. During the train trip, Ms. Lucas introduced the president-elect during a stop in her home city of Baltimore, Md. She has been invited to numerous White House events and roundtable discussions and served in 2009 as the keynote speaker for National Crime Victims Rights Week sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice. She is currently pursuing doctoral studies in Organizational Leadership at Wilmington University.

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