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Class of 2011 Exhorted to Lead Exemplary Lives

Providence, R.I.--Members of the Providence College Class of 2011 were encouraged to lead lives full of hard work, meaning, and truth during the College's Ninety-Third Commencement Exercises on May 15 at the Dunkin' Donuts Center.

In all, the College awarded 1,135 degrees--906 baccalaureate, 184 graduate, 38 from the School of Continuing

Education, and seven honorary--including bestowing the first honorary bachelor's degrees in school history on two World War II veterans.



Click here to view video of the entire Commencement 2011 program.

Graduating seniors in the Class of 2011 distinguished themselves in numerous categories:

- 645 were named to honor societies, and 259 of these earned either *summa cum laude* (45), *magna cum laude* (92), or *cum laude* (122) honors;
- 288 engaged in student government/leadership positions;
- 188 spent time studying abroad;
- 67% participated in internships;
- 117 were participants in the Liberal Arts Honors Program; and
- 87 shared a legacy tradition of having one or both parents graduate from PC.

The Class of 2011 also distinguished itself by setting a participation rate record in the Senior Giving Program. The 60% participation rate bested the previous mark of 58% by the Class of 2010. To date, the Class of 2011 campaign has raised more than \$35,000.

Individually, the honor of highest academic achievement was shared by three class members: Yi Cao '11 (East Providence, R.I.), a biology and mathematics double major; Nicole M. Kenny '11 (Fairfield, N.J.), an English major and public and community service studies minor; and Megan E. Moran '11 (West Haven, Conn.), an elementary/special education major.

Each student received straight A's--for a perfect 4.0 grade point average--throughout her academic career.

WWII veterans among 7 bestowed honorary degrees

The members of the Class of 2011 include seven distinguished individuals who were awarded honorary degrees by PC. Two of these, George Fisher and Paul V. Salley, were presented the first honorary bachelor's degrees in College history for serving in the U.S. Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) at PC during World War II.



Following the reading of the citation given to Fisher and Salley on behalf of the nearly 400 ASTP students who studied and trained in the ASTP at PC, the audience of approximately 10,000 stood and gave the two honorary degree recipients a minute-plus standing ovation.

The ASTP was a rigorous military training program instituted in 1943 by the U.S. Army at more than 120 American higher-education institutions. Fisher, Salley, and the hundreds of other young men who were enrolled as undergraduate students at PC were suddenly called to service in March 1944 and never returned to complete their education.

Thirty-seven of these members of Unit #1188 of the U.S. ASTP were killed in action in Europe. A memorial plaque was dedicated to them at PC's War Memorial Grotto in 1998.

Honorary doctoral degrees were presented to five other individuals, including three members of the Class of 1961 and a member of the Class of 1969. The recipients included the commencement speaker, John D. Ratzenberger, the actor, producer, entrepreneur, and philanthropist who is best known for his Emmy Award-nominated role as mail carrier Cliff Clavin in the landmark sitcom *Cheers*.



Ratzenberger, whose daughter, Nina K. Ratzenberger '11, was among the graduates, received an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree.

Honorary degrees also were bestowed upon:

- William J. Christie '61, president and CEO of William J. Christie Associates, Inc. and W.J. Christie International Planning Corp., Doctor of Public Service;
- David A. Duffy '61, chairman of the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority and the retired founder and chairman of Duffy & Shanley, Doctor of Public Administration;
- Dr. Stephen B. Fawcett '69, Kansas Health Foundation Distinguished Professor of Applied Behavioral Sciences and director of the Work Group for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas, Doctor of Science; and
- John J. Partridge, Esq. '61, founding partner and senior counsel of Partridge Snow & Hahn LLP, Doctor of Laws.

Senior's letter moves president

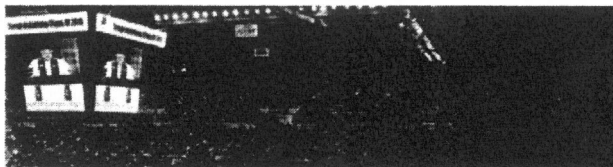
Three College representatives were among six individuals to bring greetings to the Class of 2011 at the outset of the exercises. The first, College President Rev. Brian J. Shanley, O.P. '80, shared with graduates and audience members a letter he received from a graduating senior, whom he did not wish to identify.

He said the note brought him to tears and was "the best letter I ever received in all my years because it embodied everything for me about a Providence College education." Father Shanley emphasized a section of the letter's conclusion in which the student said that PC had succeeded in helping the graduate "encounter the truth," namely, "the truth of Jesus Christ." *Veritas*, or Truth, is the College's motto.

He said he had three hopes for the graduates, including wishing that "you have learned to love and to seek truth the rest of your lives." He also said he hoped class members had learned to make their lives "a life of meaning" and that they had learned to express gratitude.

"The love of truth, a meaningful life, and a grateful heart are three things I hope Providence College has given you," he reiterated.

Fay A. Rozovsky '73 & '08Hon., president of the PC National Alumni Association, congratulated the graduates-to-be on joining the ranks of the



more than 49,000 members of the association. She encouraged them to avail themselves of the clubs, affinity groups, and other resources available through the association.

"Remember, once a Friar, always a Friar," she stated. "We really do help and look out for one another."

Rozovsky added that the phrase "always a Friar" extended to others, namely "Osmotic Friars," who made it possible for the graduates to reach this milestone in their lives. She referred to the Parents for Providence association and all alumni/ae of the College.

The third member of the College community to bring greetings to the class was Patricia A. Carroll '11 (Merrick, N.Y.), senior class president, who has served as class president for the past three years. She referred to the Father Phillip A. Smith, O.P. Student Fellowship for Study and Service Abroad she received last year and her resulting summer service in Kisumu, Kenya, where her work included teaching at Our Lady of Grace School and Orphanage.

Carroll recalled that on her last day of the fellowship experience, a Dominican nun, Sister Mary, told her to act like a giraffe ... to "stick your neck out for others and to be ready to kick for what you believe in." She advised fellow class members to do the same.

"My wish is that we follow what we love," said Carroll, alluding to several career possibilities such as business, medicine, athletics, and politics. "I hope we are people of *Veritas*, of Truth."

She said the opportunities for all are "endless" and that the world needs people of dignity and courage.

"The horizon is bright. May Providence be our guide each and every day. We are, and always will be, Friars," she said.



Also bringing greetings and congratulations were U.S. Rep. David N. Cicilline (D-First District-Rhode Island), R.I. Gov. Lincoln D. Chafee, and Providence Mayor Angel Taveras.

The Most Rev. Ernest B. Boland, O.P., D.D. '49, bishop emeritus of Multan, Pakistan, and a member of the Dominican Community at PC, gave the invocation at the beginning of the exercises.

The ceremony concluded with the benediction and blessing of the graduates by College Chaplain Rev. James Cuddy, O.P. '98, the *Alma Mater*, and the recessional. Music for commencement was provided by the Providence College Symphonic Winds ensemble, directed by Dr. Jennifer Bill '00.

Other weekend highlights:

- Commencement Weekend opened on May 13 with the ROTC Commissioning Ceremony at the War Memorial Grotto. Twelve cadets in the College's ROTC Patriot Battalion, including eight from PC, were commissioned as second lieutenants. Shortly, they will begin training at military sites ranging from Rhode Island and Massachusetts to Georgia, North Carolina, California, Hawaii, and even Germany.

The keynote speaker was U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Richard P. Formica, a 1977 Patriot Battalion alumnus who is the commanding general of the following operations: U.S. Space and Missile Defense Command, Armed Forces Strategic Command, and Joint Functional Component Command for Integrated Missile Defense.

- Activities continued on May 14 with the Academic Awards Ceremony in the Peterson Recreation Center. More than 40 special awards were presented, as well as highest in concentration honors in every academic discipline. Cao, Kenny, and Moran were recognized for sharing the overall highest in academic rank honor for the Class of 2011.

Among the special awards bestowed was the first Deborah P. Goessling Award, established in memory of the associate professor of education who died in October 2010. The award

recognizes a graduating senior from the Department of Elementary/Special Education who exemplifies the values and qualities of an excellent educator. The first recipient was Heather L. Pakstis '11 (Duxbury, Mass.).

- Also on May 14 in Peterson, the Commencement Mass and the Service of Investiture were celebrated, led by Father Shanley, the principal celebrant and homilist. The Most Rev. Thomas J. Tobin, D.D., bishop of the Diocese of Providence and a member of the Providence College Corporation, presided. The Mass was concelebrated by approximately 30 priests from the Dominican Community at PC and the diocese.

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