

MAY 22, 2009

General University News

**Retiring SBU President Shirley Strum Kenny Confers Degrees At Her Final Commencement Ceremony  
5,421 Degrees Conferred at Long Island's Largest Commencement Ceremony**

STONY BROOK, N.Y., May 22, 2009 – Shirley Strum Kenny conferred the final 5,421 degrees of her 15 year career as President of Stony Brook University at the annual University Commencement ceremony today. The Commencement – Long Island's largest – will conferred 3,391 undergraduate degrees, 1,290 Masters, 294 doctoral, 223 Doctor of Medicine/Doctor of Dental Surgery/Doctor of Physical Therapy, and 223 certificates. Dr. Kenny has conferred a total of 70,562 degrees during her tenure; 46 percent of the total degrees issued by the University since it opened.

Receiving Honorary Doctorates this year were SBU alum, **Dr. Carolyn Porco** (BS-Earth and Space Sciences/'74), and former SBU Associate Professor of Environmental Toxicology for the Marine Sciences Research Center, Dr. Charles Wurster. Dr. Porco is Director of the Cassini Imaging Central Laboratory for Operations (CICLOPS) and considered one of the foremost scientific leaders of the 21st century. In 1990, she was selected as the leader of the imaging team for the Cassini mission to Saturn, which successfully placed a spacecraft in orbit around Saturn as well as sending an atmospheric probe to Titan, Saturn's largest moon. Dr. Wurster, co-founder of the Environmental Defense Fund, is a legendary scientist who helped make revolutionary discoveries that have had a significant impact on the environment and society. Dr. Wurster is highly regarded for his scientific work in documenting the environmental damage of DDT and as an activist who led the fight for and end to its use. Both will receive an honorary Doctor of Science degree.

The Student Speaker was Ashley Barton of Westbury, a Journalism major who is graduating with a 3.30 GPA. She is a member of The National Association of Black Journalists and a member of the campus Journalism Student Advisory Board. Ashley has volunteered for Habitat for humanity and teaches Sunday school at her church. She is a T. Howard Foundation Alumni who has performed internships at NBC and News 12. The Student Speaker is chosen by a panel of students and faculty.

In giving her final presidential commencement address, Dr. Kenny culminates 15 years of guiding the institution to national and international acclaim as one of the top public institutions in the United States. Under Dr. Kenny's leadership the University earned designation as one of two "flagship" institutions of the 64-school State University of New

York system. It also developed into one of the top public research universities in the country, as evidenced by its selection for admission into the Association of American Universities, the invitation-only organization comprising just such institutions, and its ranking among the top two percent of universities worldwide by both The London Times and the Shanghai Higher Education Institute. As chairman of the landmark Boyer Commission on Educating Undergraduates in the Research University, she helped transform undergraduate education across the country. Dr. Kenny was formally recognized last year for her “extraordinary leadership and civic and cultural contributions,” receiving the prestigious Fulbright Lifetime Achievement Medal.

Part of the State University of New York system, Stony Brook University encompasses 200 buildings on more than 1,400 acres. In the 51 years since its founding, the University has grown tremendously, now with nearly 24,000 students and 2,100 faculty, and is recognized as one of the nation’s important centers of learning and scholarship. It is a member of the prestigious Association of American Universities, and ranks among the top 100 national universities in America and among the top 50 public national universities in the country according to the 2008 U.S. News & World Report survey. As one of the flagship campuses in the SUNY system, Stony Brook University is a driving force of the Long Island economy, with an annual economic impact of \$4.65 billion, generating nearly 60,000 jobs. Stony Brook accounts for nearly four percent of all economic activity in Nassau and Suffolk counties, and roughly 7.5 percent of total jobs in Suffolk County.