

A look at this year's commencement speakers

Dr. Robert Speel, professor of political science - Penn State Erie, The Behrend College
 Edward Albee, playwright - School of Visual Arts in New York City
 Madeleine Albright, former Secretary of State - Smith College in Northampton, Mass. and Washington University in St. Louis
 Alan Alda, actor - Long Island University-Southampton College
 Lisa Beamer, widow of Sept. 11 victim Todd Beamer - Westmont College in Santa Barbara, Calif.
 Michael Bloomberg, mayor of New York City - Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, N.C.
 Judy Blume, author - Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Mass.
 Ray Bradbury, author - Woodbury University in Burbank, Calif.
 Elaine Chao, U.S. Secretary of Labor - Regent University in Virginia Beach, Va.
 Lynne Cheney, wife of Vice President Dick Cheney - Harding University in Searcy, Ark.
 Bill Clinton, former president of the United States - Tougaloo College in Mississippi, joint commencement between Syracuse University in Syracuse, N.Y., and State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry in Syracuse
 Hillary Rodham Clinton, U.S. senator - State University of New York College at Cortland and State University of New York College of Agriculture and Technology at Morrisville
 Bill Cosby, actor - Bradley University in Peoria, Ill., and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
 Elizabeth Dole, U.S. senator - Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta
 William Friedkin, director of "The Exorcist" and "Rules of Engagement" - Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles
 Shantay Hinton, Miss USA 2002 - Saint Vincent's College in Bridgeport, Conn.
 Chris Matthews, host of MSNBC's "Hardball" - College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Mass.
 Queen Noor, of Jordan - Ursinus College in Collegeville, Pa.
 Yoko Ono, artist - Maine College of Art in Portland
 Richard Parsons, chairman and chief executive of AOL Time Warner - University of Hawaii in Manoa
 Jack Prelutsky, author - Framingham State College in Framingham, Mass.
 Anna Quindlen, author - Colgate University in Hamilton, N.Y.
 Andy Rooney, humorist and "60 Minutes" correspondent - Miami University in Oxford, Ohio
 Tim Russert, host of "Meet the Press" - Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pa., and Chestnut Hill College in Philadelphia
 Jane Seymour, actress - Ashland University in Ashland, Ohio
 Alejandro Toledo, president of Peru - Stanford University in Stanford, Calif.
 Sigourney Weaver, actress - Southern Connecticut State University in New Haven
 Judy Woodruff, CNN anchorwoman - Meredith College in Raleigh, N.C.

Knight Ridder/Tribune News Service
 Source: The Chronicle of Higher Education

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St. Louis University bumps airline executive as speaker

by Susan C. Thomson
 St. Louis Post-Dispatch

In what a university spokesman described as "a mutual decision," St. Louis University announced Wednesday that American Airlines CEO Donald Carty would not be the university's commencement speaker after all. Nor will the university be awarding Carty the honorary doctor of laws degree he was scheduled to receive.

Beyond that, spokesman Jeff Fowler stuck with the university's official statement: "Father Lawrence Biondi (SLU's president) and Don Carty had a conversation today and in light of recent developments decided that Mr. Carty will not participate in SLU's commencement event."

Those developments included revelations that the airline had arranged bonuses of double their base salaries that would have been paid to Carty and six other top executives for staying in their jobs through January 2005.

In another move, the airline had added extra pension benefits for 45 executives. The airline did not disclose the perks until after three groups of union employees had voted on new contracts, cutting their own pay. The airline said it needed the concessions from the employees in order to avoid having to file for bankruptcy.

The airline has since rescinded the bonuses, and Carty has apologized for withholding the details of the executive perks.

A spokesman for the airline said that Carty agreed to withdraw as speaker because he needed to focus attention on the airline's fiscal concerns. "With the financial situation still unresolved at American, Mr. Carty is trimming some near-term commitments outside of the company," spokesman Tim Wagner said. "He was looking forward to speaking at St. Louis University." Fowler said St. Louis University was now "actively looking" for a replacement speaker for commencement, scheduled for May 17.

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