



Eastern Connecticut State University

NEWS

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For Immediate Release

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Literati Marge Piercy to Deliver Commencement Address at ECSU

Willimantic, CT-- Marge Piercy, best-selling novelist and award-winning poet, will deliver the keynote address at Eastern Connecticut State University's commencement exercises on Sunday, May 22. 1,074 undergraduates, including 8 with associate degrees, and 96 graduate degrees will be conferred during the ceremony, which begins at 1:45 p.m. at the Windham Regional Vocational Technical School's athletic field, across from Eastern's Sports Center.

In the event of inclement weather, the ceremony will move indoors to the Francis E. Geissler Gymnasium in the Sports Center, and will be televised to various locations on campus, including the Betty R. Tipton in the Student Center and Room 110 in Webb Hall. WECS-FM, Eastern's public radio station, will broadcast the Commencement day activities LIVE over WECS-FM (90.1) and the Internet, beginning with the morning baccalaureate service at 10:30 a.m. WECS can be accessed from any computer worldwide through the Eastern web site.

Piercy, and Hartford Attorney James Sandler will receive honorary degrees from Eastern. "I am truly excited," said Eastern President David G. Carter. "Ms. Piercy has a gift, a power to create very real characters, and she is able to make us care about her characters in ways few authors can.

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For years, Attorney Sandler has been one of Eastern's most impassioned and dedicated supporters. Through his leadership, Eastern has been able to raise more than \$1 million to support scholarships for our students and for other institutional programs. This year's commencement will no doubt be a memorable one for our graduates, their families and their friends. ”

Piercy, world-renowned speaker and pundit, is the author of novels including the New York Times bestsellers “Gone to Soldiers”, “The Longings of Women”, and “Woman on the Edge of Time”. Piercy has also published books of poetry, and a critically acclaimed memoir “Sleeping with Cats”.

In December of 2005, Morrow/HarperCollins will publish Piercy's “Sex Wars”, a historical novel of gender, power and the American Dream set in 19th century New York City and told through the viewpoints of some of the most notorious characters in American history.

The recipient of three honorary doctorates, Piercy has been a key player in numerous social movements, including civil rights, anti-Vietnam war, feminism and most recently, the resistance to the war in Iraq.

Born in Detroit and educated at the University of Michigan, Piercy appears frequently on radio and television programs. Uniquely praised as one of the few writers who are accomplished poets as well as novelists, Piercy is one of Alfred A. Knopf's best selling poets.

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She is also the master of many genres, spanning everything from historical novels to science fiction, novels of social comment and contemporary entertainment. She has taught, lectured and/or performed her work at more than 350 universities around the world.

The commencement luncheon will be held from 11:30 to 1 p.m. on the Alvin B. Wood Support Services lawn. In the event of inclement weather, the luncheon will move indoors to the Betty R. Tipton Room of the Student Center.

The traditional “Make a Wish” procession will begin at 12:30 p.m. Faculty and staff line up along the sidewalk beside Eastern Road, beginning at the Foster Clock Tower, to salute the graduating students.

At 12:45 p.m., students symbolically exit the university in a procession through the arches of the clock tower, marching toward the fountain on north campus and then tossing a coin in the fountain, making a wish for future success. Students will line up for the commencement procession at 1:15 p.m. and the commencement exercises will begin promptly at 1:45 p.m.

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Eastern Connecticut State University is part of the Connecticut State University System and is the state's public liberal arts university. Eastern serves more than 5,000 students each year on its Willimantic campus.

It is the policy of Eastern Connecticut State University to ensure equal access to its events. If you are an individual with a disability and will need accommodations for this event, please contact the Office of University Relations at (860) 465-5735.