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Contact: University Communications, 802-656-2005,
university.communications@uvm.edu

Nina Totenberg, Annie Proulx Among 2015 Honorary Degree Recipients

Nina Totenberg, one of the nation’s preeminent legal affairs correspondents, will deliver the University of Vermont’s 2015 commencement address and receive an honorary degree from the university. Seven fellow recipients of this year’s honorary degrees will join her on the podium Sunday, May 17, including alumna and Pulitzer Prize-winning author Annie Proulx.


In 1991, her NPR report on Law Professor Anita Hill’s allegations of sexual harassment against Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas prompted the Senate Judiciary Committee to re-open Thomas’s confirmation hearings and ultimately initiated a national paradigm shift regarding sexual harassment in the workplace.

The American Bar Association (ABA) has honored her seven times, and she has received numerous awards in journalism and broadcasting. She has been consistently recognized for her broad knowledge of the U.S. legal system, her persistence in following leads, her meticulous journalistic integrity, and her courageous coverage of controversial topics. Nina Totenberg will be presented with an honorary doctor of humane letters degree. The honorary degree recipients of UVM’s 214th commencement also include:

David H. Barlow, UVM Class of 1969, is one of the most influential clinical psychologists of our time with an international reputation for his development of treatments for anxiety and related emotional disorders. He has long had strong ties to the University of Vermont and completed his doctorate at UVM in 1969. Highly regarded as a leading spokesperson for the field of clinical psychology and a renowned researcher in anxiety, he is currently Professor of Psychology and Psychiatry and Founder and Director Emeritus of the Center for Anxiety and Related Disorders at Boston University. He was previously Distinguished Professor in the Department of Psychology and Director of the Phobia and Anxiety Disorders Clinic at the University at Albany, State University of New York. He published over 600 peer reviewed research articles and over 75 books and clinical manuals, in the areas of anxiety and related emotional disorders and clinical research methodology. His books have been translated in over 20 languages, including Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, and Russian. His research has changed the understanding of anxiety, panic, and related emotional disorders and made major contributions to the development of treatments for these problems. His dedication to the application of
scientific principles of psychology for the relief of human suffering has helped countless people and significantly advanced the effectiveness of treatments around the world. Dr. Barlow will be presented with an honorary doctor of science degree.

Ian D. Boyce, UVM Class of 1989, has served the University of Vermont with dedication and passion as a student and an alumnus. A well-rounded student athlete, he served as an orientation leader, on presidential committees, and in the Boulder Society, among his many leadership activities as an undergraduate at UVM. Celebrated as one of the best two-way forwards in UVM Catamount history, he led the hockey team to compete in its first NCAA Hockey Division I tournament in 1988. He served as captain on the only UVM team to reach the ECAC Division I Championship in 1989. His senior year, he received the Keith Miser Leadership Award and Semans Trophy for leadership, loyalty, and service to the University. Following graduation, he played professional hockey for over a decade and was inducted into the UVM Athletic Hall of Fame in 1999. He served as a member of the UVM Board of Trustees from 2005 to 2012, acted in the capacity of Board Chair for two years, and generously served on multiple committees to advance the University. His effective, patient, and respectful leadership was nurtured at UVM and has been further demonstrated through his business success, his commitment to continued service to his alma mater, and his strong desire to give back to his local community. Presently, he is a Certified Financial Planner and Managing Partner with Dickmeyer Boyce Financial Management, Inc., in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Ian D. Boyce will be presented with an honorary doctor of humane letters degree.

C. Norman Coleman, UVM Class of 1966, is a renowned radiation oncologist and dedicated public servant. He graduated with a B.A. summa cum laude in Mathematics from UVM. He currently serves in multiple leadership roles at the National Cancer Institute (NCI): Associate Director for the Radiation Research Program in the Division of Cancer Treatment and Diagnosis and Senior Investigator in the Research Oncology Branch. Since 2004, he has been the Senior Medical Advisor and medical leader of the Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosives Threats team in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response in the Department of Health and Human Services. After the September 11th attacks, he led teams of experts to create a comprehensive strategy that helped the United States government and emergency responders prepare for a terrorist attack involving radiological or nuclear materials. He traveled to Japan following the 2011 earthquake and used his strategy to help the Japanese respond to the tsunami-damaged nuclear power plants. He is the author of numerous scholarly articles and the much-acclaimed book Understanding Cancer: A Patient’s Guide to Diagnosis, Prognosis and Treatment. In 2011, he received the Service to America Homeland Security Medal from the Partnership for Public Service. Working with a global network of world renowned experts including UVM colleagues, Dr. Coleman is creating the International Cancer Expert Corps, to help address the crisis in cancer care for the underserved worldwide. Dr. Coleman will be presented with an honorary doctor of science degree.

Soovin Kim is an internationally renowned violinist known for his masterful performances. After winning first prize at the Niccolò Paganini International Competition
early in his career, he went on to receive the prestigious Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award, an Avery Fisher Career Grant, and the Henryk Szeryng Foundation Career Award. He has performed around the world in some of the world's most prominent venues, including Carnegie Hall; the Kennedy Center; Concertgebouw, Amsterdam; Queen Elizabeth Hall, London; Musikverein, Vienna; and the Seoul Arts Center. He has been a soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra, the San Francisco Symphony, Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra, and Accademia di Santa Cecilia of Rome. He devotes much of his time to playing chamber music, primarily as first violinist of the Johannes String Quartet, as founder of the Made in Korea piano quartet, and at the Marlboro Music Festival in Vermont. As an active recording artist, he has commercially released four solo albums and seven chamber music albums. He is passionate about music education and previously taught at Yale University, SUNY Stony Brook, and Johns Hopkins University; he recently joined the faculty of the New England Conservatory of Music. He is the Founder and Artistic Director of the Lake Champlain Chamber Music Festival, and he continues to make major artistic and philanthropic contributions to the Vermont community. Soovin Kim will be presented with an honorary doctor of letters degree.

Holly and Bob Miller are dedicated philanthropists, who have given outstanding long-term service to the University and the State of Vermont. Together they are passionately committed to making real change in the Vermont community and know how to accomplish their goals by working collaboratively with others. Their exceptional leadership and tireless work, has significantly advanced the mission of University of Vermont Medical Center (formerly Fletcher Allen) and expanded palliative care and clinical services in end-of-life care in Vermont. Knowing that education is a primary driver of change, they have given continued support to the University of Vermont, especially through the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, and to Champlain College. They have supported economic development in the region through their many contributions to the Champlain Exposition, the City of Burlington, and the Northeast Kingdom. The scope of their leadership and philanthropy extends across the Vermont community to many important organizations, including the Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice, the Boys and Girls Club, the Flynn Theatre, King Street Youth Center, and the Vermont Women’s fund among many others. Holly and Bob Miller will both be presented with an honorary doctor of humane letters degree.

Annie Proulx, UVM Class of 1969, is a best-selling author and winner of the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award for fiction. She completed her undergraduate degree at UVM in 1969. After establishing herself as an accomplished journalist, she began writing fiction and immediately met with considerable success. Two of her early stories appeared in the prestigious Best American Short Stories collections in 1983 and 1987. Shortly afterward, she published her first book of fiction Heart Songs and Other Stories in 1988. In 1992, she won the PEN/Faulkner Award for fiction with her first novel Postcards and was the first woman to win the award. With her second novel Shipping News published in 1993, she won the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award. She has since collected many literary accolades: the O. Henry Award (which she won twice), Irish Times International Fiction Prize, and The New Yorker Book Award for Best Fiction. Additionally, she has received fellowships from the National Endowment for the
Arts and the Guggenheim. Recently, she composed a libretto for composer Charles Wuorinen to transform “Brokeback Mountain” into an opera. She has advanced the literary legacy of Vermont and made major contributions to American literature. Annie Proulx will be presented with an honorary doctor of letters degree.