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DSU's 2012 Commencement has Record 656 Graduates

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Delaware State University awarded 656 diplomas during its 2012 Commencement ceremony ? a record number of graduates in the institution?s 121-year history, surpassing the previous record of 646 in 2009.

After moving the graduation ceremony indoors during the last two years, the May 20 Commencement returned to the outdoor confines of DSU?s Alumni Stadium.

Among DSU?s 2012 graduating class? 656 degrees ? 496 bachelor?s degrees, a record 145 master?s degrees (surpassing the then-record 143 in 2008) and 15 doctoral degrees. This graduating class produced 136 honors students, which included 21 Summa Cum Laudes (3.75 GPA or above), 54 Magna Cum Laudes (3.5 to 3.74), 48 Cum Laudes (3.25 to 3.49) and 13 honorable mentions.

Dr. Williams presented Presidential Academic Excellence Awards to Jazmyne C. Hefflefinger, a movement science major from Harrisburg, Pa. who maintained a perfect 4.0 GPA throughout her undergraduate years. In addition to her academic success, Ms. Hefflefinger was a member of the DSU Women?s Bowling Team.

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GIFTS and Morrison200.jpg

DSU President Harry L. Williams congratulates Dr. Mable Morrison after she was awarded an honorary doctorate.

The DSU president also presented a Presidential Leadership Award to J. Jamel D. Smiley, who came to DSU from Augusta, Georgia. He worked as a residential assistant and senior residential assistant from 2009 to 2012, twice winner the Residential Assistant of the Year Award (2010 and 2011). During his undergraduate journey, he served as the vice president and then president of the DSU Rotaract Club. He was a McNair Research Program inductee, a member of the DSU Concert Choir, and also served as the president in 2012 of the Alpha Eta Rho Aviation Fraternity. As an aviation major Mr. Smiley maintained a 3.2 GPA.

Darrell Peebles, Jr., a graduating aviation major and ROTC cadet, was also commissioned as an U.S. Air Force Officer during a DSU Commencement Ceremony.

Mable R. Morrison, an associate professor of music and a 50-year faculty member of DSU, was presented with an Honorary Doctorate of Letters in honor her half-century of dedication and music instruction at DSU.

During the DSU Commencement weekend, the University honored the 50th anniversary of the Class of 1962 during a reception on Saturday, May 21 in the Bank of America Building on campus. Fifteen 1962 graduates of then-Delaware State College returned to their alma mater this weekend, donned robes and took part in the Commencement ceremony.

The Class of 1962 didn't show up empty-handed as they presented DSU President Harry L. Williams with a donation of $18,250 to go toward scholarships.

The Commencement ceremonies featured Warren Brown, a nationally known entrepreneur, as this year?s keynote speaker. He told the graduates that when it comes to their life?s direction, to follow their heart.

Warren Brown 200a.jpg

?Once you have identified your passion, you should do three things: first direct yourself to greatness, second answer to your call, and thirdly, answer to yourself,? Mr. Brown said.

Warren Brown left a career practicing law as a litigator for the federal government to found CakeLove bakery in 2002. He has grown his organization to include six retail storefronts and has been recognized for his entrepreneurial spirit by local and national media including *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, *Today*, NPR, and national advertisement campaigns for American Express and Dell computers.

From 2005 to 2007 Mr. Brown was the host of the television show *Sugar Rush* on the Food Network. He enjoys sharing the joys of baking and has authored three cookbooks to encourage others to bake from scratch: *CakeLove in the Morning* which celebrates weekend brunch (May 1, 2012), *United Cakes of America* featuring recipes from every state in the Union (2010), and *CakeLove-How to bake cakes from scratch* (2008).

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Warren Brown, the 2012 keynote speaker

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