



Media Alert:

PRESIDENT RUTH J. SIMMONS TO HONOR SPRING 2021 COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER MICHAEL ERIC DYSON WITH HONORARY DEGREE

This is the first honorary degree Simmons has presented as president of Prairie View A&M University.

PRAIRIE VIEW, Texas (May 13, 2021) – This Saturday, when Prairie View A&M University (PVAMU) holds its first in-person commencement since 2019, the 1,015 graduates will also get the opportunity to witness history. Ruth J. Simmons will present an honorary degree for the first time as president of PVAMU.

The honor is being bestowed upon scholar and media commentator Michael Eric Dyson, PVAMU's 139th Spring Commencement Convocation Speaker, on Saturday, May 15.

Honorary Degree

This selective honor is awarded to individuals of exceptional academic, scholarly, artistic, and philanthropic accomplishments who bring honor and recognition to the university. The honorary degree also identifies the persons' exemplary service to humanity.

Prior recipients of the PVAMU Honorary Degree include:

- The Honorable George H.W. Bush, 41st President of the United States;
- Former United States Secretary of State, General Colin Powell;
- Lt. General Julius W. Becton, Jr., 5th President of Prairie View A&M University;
- Politician and Texas Women's Hall of Fame Inductee, Wilhelmina Delco; and
- Educator and Civil Rights Activist, Willa Beatrice Player.

About Michael Eric Dyson, Commencement Speaker

Michael Eric Dyson currently serves as Centennial Chair and University Distinguished Professor of African American and Diaspora Studies in the College of Arts and Science and University Distinguished Professor of Ethics and Society in the Divinity School at Vanderbilt University.

The Detroit native earned a Ph.D. in religion from Princeton University and is an ordained Baptist minister. He is a sought-after media commentator and a contributing opinion writer at The New York Times, as well as a contributing editor at The New Republic and ESPN's The Undeclared website.



Read more about Dyson [here](#).

Media Credentials

Members of the media planning to cover the event will need press credentials. Register [here](#).

Event: PVAMU Spring 2021 Commencement

Date: Saturday, May 15, 2021

Time: 8:30 a.m.

Place: Panther Stadium

Where: www.pvamu.edu/commencement

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About Prairie View A&M University: Designated an institution of "the first class" in the Texas Constitution, Prairie View A&M University is the second-oldest public institution of higher education in the state. With an established reputation for producing engineers, nurses, and educators, PVAMU offers baccalaureate degrees, master's degrees, and doctoral degree programs through eight colleges and schools. A member of The Texas A&M University System, the university is dedicated to fulfilling its land-grant mission of achieving excellence in teaching, research, and service. For more information regarding PVAMU, visit www.pvamu.edu.

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