



College to Celebrate 169th Commencement

Ceremony to honor new graduates, distinguished alumni, trustees, faculty and staff, community members

Colby-Sawyer College will celebrate its 169th Commencement by graduating approximately 220 students and recognizing numerous individuals for academic excellence, outstanding contributions to society, and service to the college and community.

Commencement will be held on Saturday, May 12, at 11 a.m., under a tent on Colby-Sawyer's front lawn. A reception will follow at the Dan and Kathleen Hogan Sports Center. Community members are cordially invited to attend.

The celebration will include the investiture of the college's eighth president, **Thomas C. Galligan Jr.**, on whom Board of Trustees Chairman **Anne Winton Black '73, '75** will officially confer the authority and symbols of his office. President Galligan, a former law school dean and award-winning professor and legal scholar, joined Colby-Sawyer in July 2006.



Thomas Galligan

Presidential investitures are often part of major inauguration events. Colby-Sawyer chooses to celebrate the ceremony during Commencement, in keeping with the best interests of the college and our students, as well as the new president's personality and leadership style.

President Galligan previously served as dean and the Elvin E. Overton Professor of Law at the University of Tennessee College of Law in Knoxville, Tenn., where he taught torts and admiralty. From 1986 to 1998, he taught at the Paul M. Hebert Law Center at Louisiana State University, where he was named the Dr. Dale E. Bennett Professor of Law and was honored by the students as the Outstanding LSU Professor six times.

"Tom has embraced Colby-Sawyer's student-centered mission as the guiding principle behind his leadership," said Trustee Chairman Black. "His intellectual capacity and vitality are astounding, and to our good fortune, he applies these gifts with ample doses of self-deprecating humor and graciousness in his leadership role."

Professor **Hilary P. Cleveland**, a New London resident who has taught history and political science at Colby-Sawyer since 1955, will receive the college's highest award, the Susan Colgate Cleveland Medal for Distinguished Service. She will also receive the Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree.

Throughout her teaching career, Professor Cleveland has shared her vast knowledge and personal experience of history and political science with many generations of students.

"Hilary's knowledge and passion for government and politics made me believe that I could make a career in the tumultuous world of politics," said Chris Quint '98. Sally Williams Cook '74 called Professor Cleveland a force of nature and one of her favorite role models. "She made history come alive for me when I was 18 years old," Cook said.



Hilary Cleveland

Professor Cleveland has engaged in public service and civic life in her community, state and nation throughout her life. In New London, she served as town moderator for 18 years and was a founding member of both the local League of Women Voters and Adventures in Learning, the life-long learning program for which she also leads courses. She has also served as president and trustee for the N.H. Historical Society and as director for the N.H. Commission for the Arts. Under President



Maurissa Abecassis

Ronald Reagan, she served on the National Advisory Council on Continuing Education, and in 1990 she was appointed by President George H. W. Bush and confirmed by the U.S. Senate to serve as one of three U.S. Commissioners on the International Joint Commission-United States/Canada.

The Commencement Keynote Speaker, Associate Professor of Social Sciences and Education **Maurissa Abecassis**, will receive the 2007 Jack Jensen Award for Excellence in Teaching. A resident of West Lebanon, Professor Abecassis is a developmental psychologist who teaches courses in child development and psychology.

One student who changed her major to psychology after a class with Professor Abecassis explained why she works so hard in her classes with this professor. "I enjoy the class thoroughly and put in my best efforts not only because Dr. Abecassis presents the material in an interesting and cognitively stimulating manner, but because I know how high her expectations are for all of us."

Professor Abecassis, who joined Colby-Sawyer in 2000, earned a bachelor's degree with honors from the University of Winnipeg and a Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota.

Loretta S. Wonacott Barnett, professor and chair of the Fine and Performing Arts Department, will be presented with the Nancy Beyer Opler Award for Excellence in Advising. Professor Barnett, a resident of Sunapee, has taught and advised students at the college since 1978.

In one of the nominations for this award a student wrote: "Loretta cares about her students, especially her advisees. She connects with us on a personal level to make sure we are successful and happy. She is extremely knowledgeable and always pointing people in the right direction. She is strict when necessary, but always in a way to make others progress toward their goals."



Loretta Wonacott Barnett

Professor Barnett earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Boise State University and a Master of Fine Arts from Ohio State University.

Two graduating students, **Zachary W. Ackles** of Concord, Mass., and **Alicia R. Harris** of Westford, Mass., will address the graduates as the 2007 Senior Commencement Speakers. The students will address the theme of "Crossroads: Finding your Place."

Ackles, a communication studies major, was editor-in-chief of the student newspaper, *The Courier*, where he previously served as layout editor. He also joined WSCS, the college radio station, as a host and member of the Executive Board.



Alicia Harris

Harris is an English major with a double minor in theatre arts and writing for publication. She has participated in five campus theater productions, including a one-woman show, "Me: The Truth in Black and White," which she wrote and performed. A member of the Colby-Sawyer Singers and vice president of Word Order, the college's literary club, Harris also created and hosted a show dedicated to poetry and music on the college radio station.



Zachary Ackles

The Distinguished Alumni Award will be presented in absentia to **Jean "Je-Je" Harding Pierce**, an alumna of the class of 1947 and member of the college's Board of Trustees. Mrs. Pierce has distinguished herself through service, leadership and philanthropy at her alma mater and other organizations that protect the environment and provide community services. She resides in Wellesley Hills, Mass., and Boca Grande, Fla.



Je-Je Harding Pierce

A trustee since 1998, Mrs. Pierce has assisted Colby-Sawyer in its successful capital campaign and extensive efforts to beautify the campus. Through her vision, flair for design and philanthropy, she led in the creation of Pierce Park, a popular gathering place at the heart of campus. Mrs. Pierce has also hosted many college events and served as a class agent and reunion chair.

"Je-Je Pierce is a loyal and generous graduate supporter of Colby-Sawyer College," said President Galligan. "She is a fantastic trustee and a warm, kind and engaging person. We are incredibly lucky to have a friend like Je-Je."

The Town-Gown Awards, which recognize successful collaboration between the college and local communities, will honor New London Chief of Police **David J. Seastrand** and Campus Safety Director **Peter L. Berthiaume**. In their respective roles, Chief Seastrand and Director Berthiaume work toward ensuring the safety of community and college residents and have helped to build unusually strong and cooperative relationships between these communities.

Under Chief Seastrand's leadership, the New London Police Department provides education and training for the college's resident directors and



David Seastrand



Peter Berthiaume

resident assistants, which assists them in their support roles for students. The police department also hosts some of the college's student interns and provides international students with information during Student Orientation.

Chief Seastrand and his officers work closely with Campus Safety to facilitate the police department's understanding of the distinctive nature of the Colby-Sawyer campus and our students' needs. The chief attends training sessions with Campus Safety professional organizations to ensure that he and his staff serve the campus constituencies sensitively and effectively.

"The attitude of the chief, and consequently of his officers, is that we are in this together to create a safer community for all," said Director Berthiaume. "It's this attitude that makes the relationship between the town of New London and Colby-Sawyer College a model for other college towns across the country."

Chief Seastrand has led the New London Police Department since 1995 and has been with the force since 1985, first as a dispatcher and then as a patrolman and sergeant. He is vice president of the Merrimack County Chiefs of Police and a member of the New London Emergency Management Committee and the New Hampshire Chiefs of Police.

As director of Campus Safety since 1993, Berthiaume ably serves the college community, the town of New London and the state of New Hampshire. His primary role revolves around caring for, educating and protecting students, which involves close collaboration across the college and with local officials, health services and law enforcement.

Director Berthiaume has taken a leading role in developing all-hazards emergency plans to prepare the college community and local residents for small- and large-scale emergencies. He has served on the New London Emergency Management Committee since 2001 and was recently appointed as its director. In this role he leads the planning and coordination of medical, police, fire, public health and other services during major emergencies.

"Given his strong working relationship and established level of trust with the town's public safety officials, Peter was a natural for the leadership role on the Emergency Management Committee," said New London Town Administrator Jessie Levine. "We appreciate that one of his first steps is to oversee the development of a Web site to better educate the entire community on emergency protocols."

Colby-Sawyer will recognize members of the class of 2007 for outstanding achievement as scholars, campus leaders and student athletes. **Samantha F. Godfrey** of Oakland, Maine, and **Zachary W. Ackles** are the recipients of the Senior Achievement Awards, which recognize students who have distinguished themselves through active leadership in co-curricular activities.

The Alpha Chi Award recipient, **Sarah E. Howard** of South Hamilton, Mass., was chosen as the student who best exemplifies the Alpha Chi National College Honor Society's ideals of truth and character. The Colby-Sawyer Award, presented by the faculty to a student whose intellectual growth and contributions to campus life have positively influenced his or her fellow students, will be presented to **Kara A. Watts** of Loudon, N.H.

Shawn P. Fleisner '06 of Derry, N.H. is this year's recipient of the Graduate Award. This award recognizes a member of the preceding class whose character and influence benefited this year's senior class.



Jeffrey Blood



Kara Watts

Baccalaureate Awards will be presented to students who have demonstrated the highest degree of dedication and excellence in their fields of study. The award recipients include the following students: **Lisa C. Haedrich** of Eliot, Maine (Art); **John P. O'Laughlin** of Barrington, Ill., (Biology); **Robert S. Silva** of Westford, Mass. (Business Administration); Dr. Margaret "Marnie" Kurtz (Award); **Leah M. Salach** of Salem, N.H. (Child Development); and **Nicole M. Iapicca** of Reading, Mass. (Communication Studies).

Baccalaureate Awards will also be presented to the following students: **Carly J. Rademaker** of Williamsville, N.Y. (Community and Environmental Studies); **Kara A. Watts** (English: Carl M. Cochran Award); **Lesley A. Bolton** of Old Lyme, Conn. (Exercise and Sport Sciences); **Jeffrey B. Blood** of Londonderry, N.H. (Graphic Design); **Sarah E. Howard** (History, Society and Culture); **Paula S. Spanos** of South Portland, Maine (Nursing: The Grace Adella Sheldon Graves Award); and **Sarah J. Dow** of Vassalboro, Maine (Psychology).

The Wynne Jesser McGrew Scholar-Athlete Award recipient will be presented to **Jessica L. Niebuhr** of Manitou Springs, Colo. This award recognizes the female graduate who has made significant contributions to the college's scholastic and varsity athletic programs. **Sean P. Gildea** of Haverhill, Mass., will receive

the Scholar-Athlete Award, which honors a male student who contributed significantly to the college's scholastic and varsity athletic programs.

The David H. Winton Baccalaureate Award, which honors the graduate with the highest cumulative grade point average, will be presented at Commencement.

To learn more about Commencement 2007 at Colby-Sawyer College, visit the Web site at www.colby-sawyer.edu/campus-life/commencement.