



May 22, 2017

**BRISTOL COMMUNITY COLLEGE CELEBRATES ITS ANNUAL  
COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY ON JUNE 3**

Bristol Community College is honored to announce that Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker will be the College's featured speaker at its Commencement on Saturday, June 3, 2017. President John J. Sbrega, Ph.D., who is retiring after 17 years of service to the College on August 1, will preside.

The ceremony will start at 11 a.m. under the tent on the Elsbree Street, Fall River Campus. The tent will be raised on the activity field at the north end of the campus by Valentine Street.

As one of the largest community college graduating classes in Massachusetts, BCC expects to award approximately 1650 degrees and certificates including degrees in associate in science, associate in arts, and associate in applied science. Certificates of achievement will also be awarded. Academic achievement with cum laude, magna cum laude, and summa cum laude designations will be recognized.

The BCC Board of Trustees has approved the following prestigious awards to be presented during the commencement ceremony:

- The Distinguished Citizen Award is presented annually to an outstanding local citizen whose character and achievements have enriched the life of the community, or to an individual who has made distinguished contributions in the fields of health, education, business, industry, labor, government, or the arts. This year, the Distinguished Citizen Award will be presented to Fall River Chief of Police Daniel S. Racine.
- The Massachusetts Department of Higher Education has granted Bristol Community College the right to award honorary associate degrees in humane letters. The College awards this degree to an individual who illustrates through a career of intellect and service the best of Bristol Community College's vision – to change the world, learner by learner. This year's recipients are Reverend Dr.

Robert P. Lawrence and Governor Baker.

- The John J. Sbrega, Ph.D., Exemplary Service Award is given to a past or present member of the Board of Trustees, Foundation Board of Directors, Alumni Association, or a College volunteer who has contributed time, talent, energy, and knowledge to the institution. This year's award will be given to James T. Grady, Esq.

Students graduating summa cum laude are invited to apply for the honor of giving the Valedictory Address. From the finalists, two students are selected to represent their classmates based on their academic excellence and College and community achievements. They lead the Student Processional. This year's Valedictorian is Tracy Cooley, of Somerset, Nursing, and the Salutatorian is Samuel K. Lema, of Fall River, Engineering Science Transfer.

The Last Lecture is a faculty honor created by the BCC Student Senate. The award honors one exemplary faculty member who has affected students' education and their lives in significant ways. Joanne Carroll-Connor, Adjunct Instructor in Business Administration, has been selected by students to deliver the Last Lecture.

During the ceremony, the College will acknowledge the appointment of two retired faculty members as Professor Emeriti. This award recognizes retired members of the faculty chosen by their peers for excellence in teaching and community service. This year there are two appointments: David Owen, Professor Emeritus of Astronomy and Biology, and Gabriel Pereira, Professor Emeritus of History.

BCC's graduation continues to be "green" in line with President Sbrega's participation in the national College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment. Both the Commencement programs and Student Awards Night programs are being printed on paper made from recycled products. The graduates will wear gowns made from recycled soda bottles. The food at the reception will be served on recycled paper products, and the utensils are made of biodegradable cornstarch. The College installed dual-purpose containers for trash and recycling, and to eliminate mailing, the graduates will be able to view their graduation photos online by the photo vendor.

BCC encourages anyone attending commencement to check the College's website for more information at [bristolcc.edu/commencement](http://bristolcc.edu/commencement), including parking and trolley service, and items that will be prohibited under the tent.

***About Bristol Community College** Bristol Community College is a leading resource for education and workforce development in Southeastern Massachusetts. BCC has locations in Fall River, Attleboro, New Bedford, and Taunton, along with flexible online offerings that lead to an associate degree, a career-ready certificate, or the ability to seamlessly transfer to baccalaureate colleges throughout the state and country. The College's Center for Workforce and Community Education provides customized training for*

*businesses and the community including healthcare, workforce and sustainable initiatives, corporate services, and Kids College. The BCC Foundation, a non-profit organization utilizing community donations and partnerships, supports the College's mission to meet the lifelong educational needs of the community. For more information, visit <http://www.bristolcc.edu/aboutbcc/>*