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Endicott College in Beverly to hold commencement ceremony on

Saturday, May 19

Posted by Ryan Mooney May 17, 2012 11:45 AM

By Ryan Mooney, Globe Correspondent

Endicott College will hold its 72nd commencement ceremony on Saturday, May 19 at 10:30 a.m.

The college will award degrees to 750 students in total - including nine from Beverly and 30 from Massachusetts - with 600 students expected to participate in the ceremony at The Stadium. Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters will be awarded to retiring Senator Fred Berry and this year's commencement speaker, Salome Thomas-EL.

"At this point we've chosen to award Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters to both of our candidates for a lot of the things that they do in the community," said Joanne Waldner, assistant to Endicott President Richard Wylie. "They're really very social-conscious."

Berry, a lifelong Peabody resident, represents the communities of Beverly, Danvers, Peabody, Salem, and Topsfield in the 2nd Essex District, and has served as Majority Leader since 2003. The Bishop Fenwick High School and Boston College graduate is calling it quits when his 14th term in the Massachusetts State Senate expires in January.

"He is a great guy," Waldner said of Berry. "He's well-respected and well-known on the North Shore, he's done an awful lot for the community, and we're just thrilled that we are able to give him this award."

Thomas-EL, a nationally recognized educator, served as a teacher and principal in Philadelphia from 1987-2009, and is currently the Head of School at Thomas Edison Charter School in Wilmington, Del., but he is no stranger to Endicott. He spoke to Endicott students in the past for a Founders' Day ceremony, and was most recently on campus this spring to meet with Endicott professors to talk about his goals and aspirations, and offer advice on how educators can reach their full potential.



Nationally recognized educator Salome Thomas-EL will serve as commencement speaker for Endicott's graduating class of 2012.

Photo provided by Joanne Waldner.

"He's a very inspirational speaker," Waldner said of Thomas-EL.

The Philadelphia native is most widely recognized as a regular contributor on the first season of "The Doctor Oz Show" and the author of *I Choose to Stay* - for which Walt Disney Pictures owns the rights to a movie adaptation - and *The Immortality of Influence*.

"We've kind of had this connection with him over the years and thought he would be a really good representation for our community," Waldner said.

The school will also distinguish Dr. William Young, associate professor of humanities at Endicott, with the Excellence in Teaching Award as chosen by the students. Dr. Young - a seventh-year Endicott professor who previously taught at James Madison University, Loyola College and King's College - will speak at a baccalaureate ceremony Friday night, as well as the commencement ceremony on Saturday.

