

NEWS RELEASE

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NC State to Award Four Honorary Degrees at Fall Commencement

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Two distinguished leaders in academia will join two high-achieving North Carolina State University alumni in receiving honorary degrees at NC State's Fall Commencement on Wednesday, Dec. 17, at the RBC Center in Raleigh.

Chancellor Marye Anne Fox will confer honorary degrees on behalf of NC State to Dr. Shirley Ann Jackson, president of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), who is also the commencement speaker; Dr. E. Travis York, chancellor emeritus of the State University System of Florida; Lt. Gen. Dan K. McNeill, commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan; and John P. Sall, co-founder and executive vice president of SAS Institute.



Dr. Shirley Ann Jackson

Jackson has been president of RPI since 1999. A theoretical physicist, her career has been marked by a series of "firsts." In 1995, she was the first African-American woman appointed to head the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, where she is credited with overhauling procedures and processes in planning, budgeting, safety evaluation and performance management. She is the first African-American to earn a Ph.D. in any field from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the first African-American woman to head a national research university.

A member of the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering and the American Physical Society, Jackson strives to encourage minority students to pursue careers in the sciences. She earned her baccalaureate degree in physics at MIT.

York served as chancellor of the University of Florida System from 1975 to 1980. He began his academic career as an associate professor in agronomy at NC State, where he rose to the position of professor and head of the department. During his career, he held numerous

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positions at the University of Florida, including provost for agriculture and vice president for agricultural affairs. He is now Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus at the University of Florida.

York answered the call to national service at the requests of U.S. Presidents Kennedy, Nixon, Carter and Reagan, serving two terms on the Board for International Food and Agricultural Development and leading multiple presidential missions on agricultural development to a variety of countries. He received bachelor's and master's degrees from Auburn University, and his Ph.D. from Cornell University.

McNeill commanded American military forces in Afghanistan in the fight against terrorism. In Afghanistan, he commanded almost all of the 7,000 U.S. forces and has coordinated the efforts of coalition forces from Canada, Britain and other countries.

His military career has included command of airborne infantry units at the company, battalion, brigade and corps levels. Most recently, McNeill commanded the 82nd Airborne Division and later the 18th Airborne Corps at Fort Bragg, high honors for an army general. In 2000, under his command, Fort Bragg won recognition as one of the two top army posts in the nation. McNeill earned a bachelor's degree from NC State in 1968 and upon graduating was commissioned as a second lieutenant.

One of the co-founders of the world's largest privately held software company, Sall has designed, developed and documented many of SAS Institute's earliest analytical procedures. He has supervised the start-up of a number of SAS initiatives. He was principal designer and developer of JMP (a graphically oriented statistical package developed originally for Macintosh computers), and now leads the JMP product team and is responsible for the SAS InSchool division.

He was elected Fellow of the American Statistical Association in 1998. He earned his bachelor's degree from Beloit College, a master's degree from Northern Illinois University, and has studied graduate-level statistics at NC State.