

NEWS RELEASE

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Four to Receive Honorary Degrees from NC State at Commencement

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A nationally honored school superintendent, a prodigious inventor, a top textiles executive and an internationally acclaimed photographer will receive honorary degrees from North Carolina State University during fall commencement on Wednesday, Dec. 14, at the RBC Center in Raleigh. Commencement ceremonies will begin at 9 a.m.

William R. (Bill) McNeal, superintendent of the Wake County Public School System and winner of the 2004 National Superintendent of the Year award from the American Association of School Administrators, will give the commencement address and receive an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree.



William R. (Bill) McNeal

Dean Kamen, president and founder of DEKA Research and Development Corp.; W. Duke Kimbrell, chairman of the board for Parkdale Mills; and Hugh Morton, a North Carolina conservationist, naturalist and photographer, will receive honorary degrees on behalf of NC State from Chancellor James L. Oblinger.

McNeal has devoted nearly his entire career to the Wake County Public School System, serving as a teacher, assistant principal, principal, assistant superintendent and associate superintendent before being named superintendent in July 2000. His career in Wake County spans 31 years. As superintendent, McNeal has worked to narrow the achievement gap while embracing a new goal: high academic growth and 95 percent of students meeting academic standards by 2008.

McNeal serves on numerous boards and professional organizations, including the Governor's Education First Task Force, the Southern Regional Education Board and the Wake County Education Partnership Board of Directors. He received bachelor's and master's degrees from N.C. Central University in 1971 and 1976, respectively.

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An advocate for science and technology, Kamen is an inventor who holds more than 150 U.S. and foreign patents, many of them for innovative medical devices. These include the IBOT, a wheelchair that can negotiate stairs and rough surfaces, go over curbs and raise a seated person to eye level with a standing person; a portable dialysis machine; and the first wearable insulin pump.

Kamen is a member of the National Academy of Engineering and a fellow of the American Institute of Medical and Biological Engineering. He received the National Medal of Technology from former President Clinton in 2000. He has also been awarded the Heinz Award in Technology, the Economy and Employment, and the Hoover Medal from the American Society of Mechanical Engineers; and has been inducted into the National Inventors Hall of Fame. He will receive an honorary Doctor of Sciences degree.

Kimbrell is chairman of the board for Parkdale Mills, the world's largest independent cotton yarn manufacturer. Prior to serving as board chair, Kimbrell was CEO of Parkdale Mills; during that time, Kimbrell helped transform the company from a 200-employee, \$11 million company into a 3,600-employee firm with \$934 million in sales.

A noted leader in his field, Kimbrell has received numerous accolades from *Textile World* magazine, including the Lifetime Achievement Award and Leader of the Year. He serves on the board of directors for the American Textile Manufacturers Institute and chairs the cotton committee. Kimbrell received NC State's Watauga Medal, which honors those who have made significant contributions to the advancement of the university, in 1995. He will receive an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree.

Morton's photographs have appeared in numerous publications, including *Time*, *National Geographic* and other important publications. Two years ago, he published *Hugh Morton's North Carolina*, a collection of 264 photographs chronicling the state's history and beauty. Besides being a highly acclaimed photographer, Morton is a conservationist and naturalist whose preservation efforts have been lauded by North Carolinians.

Morton owns North Carolina's Grandfather Mountain and has worked tirelessly to preserve and promote the state's natural treasures. He has received numerous accolades from fellow North Carolinians, including the John Tyler Caldwell Award for the Humanities, the highest award given by the N.C. Humanities Council; the North Carolinian of the Year award from the N.C. Press Association; and the North Carolina Society Award. Morton will receive an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree.

For more information about NC State's fall 2005 commencement activities visit www.ncsu.edu/registrar/graduation/index.html.