



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Former Gov. Jeb Bush to Keynote at Ave Maria Commencement

AVE MARIA, Fla. – (January 23, 2012) – Jim Towey, president of Ave Maria University, announced today that Florida’s 43rd Governor, Jeb Bush, will address the Ave Maria University graduating class of 2012.

“Our graduates deserve the best and Governor Bush will provide the perfect conclusion to their Ave Maria education and leave them with a lasting memory. I look forward to having him on campus again and hearing his remarks,” Towey said.

Former Governor Bush also will receive an honorary doctorate degree from Ave Maria University because of his noteworthy service as a two-term governor, during which he presided over an era of economic prosperity, made Florida’s public school system more accountable and productive, and successfully navigated the aftermaths of a series of devastating hurricanes. Governor Bush earned a bachelor’s degree in Latin American Affairs at the University of Texas and co-authored *Profiles in Character*, which chronicles the lives of 14 Floridians of distinction.

The University’s 8th Commencement Exercises will take place on May 5, 2012 and begin at 11AM. Joining Governor Bush and also receiving an honorary doctorate degree will be William E. Simon, Jr., co-chairman of William E. Simon & Sons, LLC, a global merchant bank headquartered in Los Angeles, California. Simon earned his bachelor’s degree from Williams College and his law degree from Boston College, and has served on numerous governing boards in education. He was Republican nominee for the governor of California in 2002, running as a pro-life candidate, and continues to enjoy considerable influence in the state. He and his wife established a foundation that helps needy youngsters in urban areas. Simon will briefly address the graduates after receiving his honorary degree.

“Bill Simon, like Jeb Bush, has shown courage in the public square and made a significant difference,” Towey added. “He has been a friend of Ave Maria University for years and we are privileged to honor him.”

Ave Maria University was founded by Thomas S. Monaghan in 2003 and expects 175 men and women to participate in the commencement ceremonies that will award both graduate and undergraduate degrees.

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About Ave Maria University

Ave Maria University (AMU) was founded in 2003 to provide a liberal arts education in the Catholic tradition. To this end, the university was founded on the principles of the apostolic document *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. AMU is dedicated to the advancement of human culture, the promotion of dialogue between faith and reason, the formation of men and women in the intellectual and moral virtues of the Catholic faith, and the development of professional and pre-professional programs in response to local and societal needs. The university features a broad range of undergraduate courses and programs ranging from the humanities to business administration. AMU also offers graduate degrees in Theology at the master's and doctoral levels. Ave Maria University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the American Academy of Liberal Education.