WILLIAM PATTERSON UNIVERSITY TO HOLD COMMENCEMENT CEREMONIES
--U.S. Senator Cory Booker to give commencement address at undergraduate ceremony on May 20 at Prudential Center in Newark
-- Bernard J. Milano, president and trustee of the KPMG Foundation, and president and trustee, to receive honorary degree at graduate ceremony on May 18 on campus

U.S. Sen. Cory Booker of New Jersey will give the commencement address at William Paterson University’s undergraduate commencement ceremony on Friday, May 20, 2016 at 9 a.m. at the Prudential Center in Newark.

The ceremony will include speeches by University President Kathleen Waldron and students Julie Edewaard of Hawthorne, valedictorian, who will receive a bachelor’s degree in English and Asian studies, summa cum laude. In addition, three faculty members—Michael Principe, professor of political science and legal studies; Miryam Wahrman, professor of biology; and Mark Ellis, professor of sociology and criminology/criminal justice—will be recognized.

More than 2,800 students whose bachelor’s degrees will be awarded between August 2015 and August 2016 will be recognized at the undergraduate ceremony. Alumni from the Class of 1966, who are celebrating their 50th reunion, and who graduated when William Paterson was called Paterson State College, will be present at the ceremony.

More than 400 master’s degree candidates will be recognized at the graduate commencement ceremony that will take place on Wednesday, May 18, 2016 at the Shea Center for Performing Arts on campus at 7 p.m.

Bernard J. Milano, president and trustee of the KPMG Foundation, and president and trustee of the KPMG Disaster Relief Fund, will receive an honorary doctor of humane letters degree. Milano is also treasurer of the board of directors of Campus Compact, a national organization dedicated to promoting community service in higher education, and president and board member of The PhD Project, a national diversity organization that has quadrupled the number of business school faculty who are African American, Hispanic American or Native American. He is a resident of Allendale.

In addition to remarks by President Waldron, the graduate ceremony will include a speech by 2016 graduate Nicky Lee-Castaneda of Prospect Park who will receive a master of arts in teaching degree.

Highlighted below are a number of graduating students who would make interesting feature stories. If you are interested in speaking with one of these students at commencement or beforehand, please call me at 973.720.2966.

Graduate commencement on Wednesday, May 18 at 7 p.m.—Shea Center for Performing Arts on
Kareem McKenzie, Caldwell: McKenzie, former New York Giants offensive tackle, will earn a master’s degree in professional counseling. After a successful 11-year NFL career, resulting in two Super Bowl wins, McKenzie struggled with the idleness of retirement from football. He discovered the mental health benefits of counseling firsthand and was motivated to provide the same support for professional athletes and retired members of the military who experience similar issues. He plans to earn a professional counseling license and pursue a doctorate program.

Undergraduate commencement on Friday, May 20 at 9 a.m.—Prudential Center in Newark:

Julie Edewaard, Hawthorne: Julie Edewaard is a January 2016 graduate with a bachelor of arts degree, summa cum laude, in English and Asian Studies, Japanese language track, with a minor in philosophy. A Dean’s List student throughout her entire career, Edewaard was inducted into Sigma Tau Delta, the English honor society, and Phi Sigma Tau, the philosophy honor society. She was named the Outstanding Graduate in Asian Studies and received the College of Humanities and Social Sciences Dean’s Award in the Humanities. Edewaard has served as a tutor of writing and Japanese for the University’s Academic Success Center. She is a dedicated volunteer for world hunger causes, including work with the organization Feed My Starving Children. She hopes to be a published novelist.

Adam Lopez, Flanders: Adam Lopez is a January 2016 graduate of William Paterson University with a bachelor of arts degree in history and secondary education, summa cum laude, and an endorsement in special education. A Dean’s List student, he has been inducted into Pi Lambda Theta, the international honor society in education, and Phi Alpha Theta, the international honor society in history. He is pursuing a career as a social studies teacher.

Matt Orso, Ramsey: Orso will receive a bachelor of arts degree in print journalism. He is a freelance researcher for MLB network where he received a 2014 Emmy Award in the category “Outstanding Studio Show – Daily” for his work with the MLB Tonight team. He served as editor of the Pioneer Times and has published two books about baseball: Bonded at the Seams: Baseball in Our Lives (2012) and Baseball Card Generations (2014).

Mayelin De La Cruz, Lodi: De La Cruz, who immigrated from the Dominican Republic at age 9, will receive a dual bachelor of arts degree in philosophy and anthropology. She secured an internship with Hackensack University Medical Center’s director of bioethics, Linda Farber Post, whom she collaborated with on an advance directive/living will project. De La Cruz is the founder and president of the Bioethics Club, a member of the National Society of Success and Leadership, and has presented at national conferences on non-emergency medical transport ethics. She also earned Prized Best Presentation Award at the Sherwin B. Nuland Summer Institute in Bioethics at Yale in 2015. She was accepted to the Einstein-Cardozo bioethics graduate program at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

Maryann Mwenya, Elmwood Park: Mwenya, who will receive a bachelor’s degree in early childhood education and English, taught in China for four years after spending time in Nanjing as part of the Study Abroad Student Program in 2002. Before resuming her undergraduate studies, she overcame two major brain surgeries. Visiting her ailing father in the fall 2015 semester in a Staten Island hospital, she completed her assignments in the car while her husband drove. She will graduate magna cum laude and become the first member of her family to earn a college degree.

Valerie Cadorette, Rutherford: Cadorette, a double major in public health and earth science and an English writing minor, is an environmental health intern at Northwest Bergen County Utilities Authority, where she provides water treatment services that accommodate 75,000 people in northern New Jersey. Cadorette collects and analyzes data for the Department of Public Health at William Paterson University and works to reduce substance abuse for United for Prevention in Passaic County. She is the 2016 recipient of the Dean’s Award from the College of Science and Health and will graduate summa cum laude. Before pursuing a career in water treatment and research, she plans on earning her Level 1 Public Wastewater Treatment System license and becoming a registered environmental health specialist for New Jersey.

Tim Gysin, Hillsborough: Gysin, a music major, is a multi-talented performer who has been practicing music
since the age of two. A vocalist, Gysin is also a standout pianist, guitarist, bassist, harmonica player, and songwriter who has landed gigs in over 200 venues including a cable television appearance on VH1’s Make a Band Famous and performances for NJ Transit’s “Music in Motion” program.

**Michelle LeGrand, Dumont:** LeGrand will receive a bachelor of science degree in psychology. She created “Doodle and Dots,” a non-profit art program for children in Paterson, New Jersey that introduces art as a unique team-building tool to children living in low socioeconomic status communities. LeGrand, who is graduating magna cum laude, was inducted into the International Honors Society of Psychology and won first place in the Student Art Show at the Northeast Regional Honors Conference 2016 for her ceramic sculpture, “Enslaved No More.” She has been accepted into Southwestern College in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where she will earn a dual master’s degree in art therapy and mental health counseling.

**Courtnaey Chelf, Hawthorne:** Chelf, who will receive a bachelor of arts degree in broadcast journalism and psychology, will become a medical service corps officer in the U.S. Army. She has conducted research analyzing traumatic brain injury in combat veterans and examined the long-term effects of multiple concussions in combat veterans. She was inspired by the lack of research being conducted on this topic. Chelf is a member of the National Student-Athlete Honor Society and was selected to the 2012-14 National Field Hockey Coaches Association, National Academic Squads, 2012-14 NJAC All-Academic Honorable Mentions and is an eight-time Dean’s List student. Following a four-year tour of duty as a medical service corps officer, she hopes to return to school to become a physician’s assistant.

**Randall Sanders, Wallington:** Sanders will graduate with a bachelor’s degree in earth science and secondary education. He has participated in a collaborative project with the National Park System-Paterson Great Falls National Historic Park (NPS-PGF), the Paterson Museum and William Paterson University undergraduate students to develop science standard-aligned curriculum packages for the Paterson grade 3-12 community. This project hopes to create dynamic hands-on lessons that will be taught to students at the Paterson Great Falls National Historic Park. Sanders will be graduating magna cum laude and is the recipient of the Excellence in Environmental Science Award.

**Gabriela Salvador, Kearny:** Salvador will receive a bachelor of arts degree in print journalism and English. Long interested in historical fashion, she conducted research on the political and cultural influences on French women’s fashion during the 18th century. She found that though women had no voice in the political sphere, they used their clothing to express political allegiances. Salvador was honored as a Legacy Scholar at the 2016 Legacy Gala and has interned as a fashion writer for Cliché magazine.

**Michael Parmese, North Haledon:** Parmese, who will earn a bachelor of science degree in business management, has conducted research on millennial engagement with charitable causes. He focused on two areas: relationships that exist between intention to participate in charities, and participant ethnicity and gender. Parmese hopes to add data to this infrequently researched topic to be used to help charities create more targeted and focused marketing and advertisements that help them to reach their intended audience more effectively. He is a member of Beta Gamma Sigma and a student in the Honors College.

**Erick Veras, Paterson:** Veras began college as an Equal Opportunity Fund (EOF) student unsure of his place in school, but will finish as the first in his family to graduate from college. A double major in business management and psychology, his academic achievements include: multiple Dean’s List honors, induction into Psi Chi International Honor Society in psychology and Chi Alpha Epsilon National Honor Society, and the EOF Outstanding Academic Achievement Award. Veras also conducted research with his professors on the psychological effects of incorporating gaming and interactive elements to enhance degree audits for university students. After graduation, he will attend Lingnan University in Hong Kong on a full scholarship with plans to earn a master’s degree in human resources.

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