



# News Release

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## **Madonna University's Sixty-second Commencement Ceremony Will Honor Area Leaders**

LIVONIA, Mich. – Nearly 1,025 graduates will join the Madonna University alumni ranks during the sixty-second commencement ceremony, Sunday, May 3, 1:30 p.m., at Compuware Arena, in Plymouth. Approximately 760 students will receive a bachelor's or associate degree, with the remainder earning a master's degree.

An honorary doctorate degree will be bestowed upon Edward M. Parks, CPA, of Birmingham, Mich. The Distinguished Alumnus Award will be given to Dr. Michael Harbut '78. (biographical information listed below)

During a special honorary doctorate conferral last October, at the University's Gala, Madonna University President Sr. Rose Marie Kujawa, CSSF, presented Archbishop Pietro Sambi, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, with a Doctor of Humanities degree. He was honored for his extraordinary life of service to the Church and many areas of the world as a representative of the Holy Father. As a special advisor to the Franciscan Foundation for the Holy Land, the Apostolic Pro Nuncio supports the work of the Franciscans and is particularly committed to priestly formation and Catholic higher education (Madonna is a Catholic, Franciscan university.)

Presiding over the commencement ceremony will be Madonna University Vice President for Academic Administration Ernest I. Nolan. The invocation will be given by Teresa Thompson, dean of the College of Nursing and Health, with vocals performed by graduate Kendra Ritter, of Howell. The mace bearer will be Dr. Nancy O'Connor, graduate nursing program chairperson.

All graduates and their families are invited to attend the Graduation Mass, Saturday, May 2, 4 p.m., in the Presentation Chapel at the Felician Sisters Motherhouse, located at 36800 Schoolcraft Road, in Livonia. Archbishop Allen Vigneron, Archdiocese of Detroit, will serve as the celebrant. A reception hosted by Sr. Rose Marie Kujawa, will be held in the University Center Dining Room immediately following the Mass.

### Biographical information for the Madonna University commencement honorees.

#### **Edward M. Parks, CPA, Honorary Doctor of Humanities degree recipient**

Born and raised in Detroit, Parks graduated summa cum laude from John Carroll University with a bachelor's degree in business administration. A year later, in 1962, he earned a Master of Business Administration with distinction from the University of Michigan. Parks received the prestigious William Paton Award for achieving the highest score on the Uniform Certified Public Accountant Examination.

Early in his career, Parks served as finance officer in the U.S. Army Signal Corps. He joined the Plante & Moran family in 1964 as a member of the audit staff. In 1981, Parks became managing partner and served in that capacity until 1993, when he was named vice chairman and business advisory partner. Since 2001, he has been a consultant to the firm. Concurrently, he has nurtured a 70-year-old family title business with his brother and a son.

As a trustee on the Thompson Foundation board, Parks became intimately aware of Madonna's Southwest Detroit Women's Educational Empowerment Project (SWEEP), through grants the Foundation awarded to help students with tuition.

For several years now, through the Parks Charitable Trust Foundation, Parks and wife Gerri have awarded generous grants that assist needy students with the purchase of textbooks. "We visited the center, met the wonderful staff and students, and were both personally inspired," said Parks.

### **Michael Harbut, M.D., MDH, FCCP, '78, Distinguished Alumnus**

An internationally-known expert in the diagnosis and treatment of environmental and workplace diseases, Dr. Michael Harbut serves the Detroit-area medical community in many capacities. He is co-director for the National Center for Vermiculite and Asbestos-related Cancers at Karmanos Cancer Institute, while maintaining an active clinical practice and teaching service for medical students and professionals at the Center for Occupational and Environmental Medicine in Royal Oak.

"If ever there was a man born to be a doctor, Dr. Harbut is such a man," wrote one of his cancer patients on a Web blog, where several others concurred.

As a healthcare advocate, Harbut has addressed congressional members, was invited to speak at the White House about asbestosis, and has been published in numerous prestigious publications, including the *New England Journal of Medicine*. He co-authored the world's largest study of respiratory health in asbestos-exposed ironworkers and has received an abundance of awards. In 2007, he was honored with the Selikoff Lifetime Achievement Award from the Asbestos Disease Awareness Foundation

Harbut holds a Master of Public Health degree in environmental and industrial health, as well as a Dypлом (Master of Science) in Eastern European history, in addition to the Doctor of Medicine degree. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree at Madonna University in the social science business core program.

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