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Honorary Degree Citation: Michael Beschloss

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Granted 2009

Michael Beschloss

Michael Beschloss has dedicated his life's work to understanding one of the most complex and important aspects of American history. Through his research, observation, and analysis, he continually strives to define the characteristics that make the great leaders of the United States.

In each of his eight books, many of them best sellers, he has illustrated that to achieve greatness a leader must exhibit a courage that risks popularity, re-election, even life.

In making his observations, Michael Beschloss has exhibited his own brand of courage. He has taken on the icons of the American Presidency with an honesty and directness that is not always comfortable to his readers. He challenges our tendency to idolatry and demands that we ground our admiration in fact, not fantasy.

As a regular commentator on *The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer* on PBS and as the NBC News Presidential Historian, Mr. Beschloss adds to the perceptive analysis he presents in his eight volumes on presidential history including his two most recent works: *Presidential Courage* and *The Conquerors*.

Mr. Beschloss grew up in the south suburbs of Chicago. He is a trustee of the White House Historical Association, and is on the board of the Smithsonian's Museum of American History and the advisory board to the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission. He also received an Emmy Award for the 2005 Discovery Channel production *Decisions that Shook the World*. Mr. Beschloss has received the State of Illinois's Order of Lincoln and the Harry S. Truman Public Service Award.

Governors State University is proud to award the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, honoris causa, and welcome to our community of involved and engaged scholars, educators, and students – Michael Beschloss.