

2015

Honorary Degree Citation: Elizabeth Brackett

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Governors State University, "Honorary Degree Citation: Elizabeth Brackett" (2015). *Commencements*. Paper 133.
<http://opus.govst.edu/commencements/133>

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Elizabeth Brackett

Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters, Honoris Causa

A true journalist is a seeker of truth, willing to explore the sometimes dark corners of the human experience, willing to shine a light for the world to see. Elizabeth Brackett is such a journalist.

Ms. Brackett is not afraid to seek out the truth and bring it into the open. Her in-depth reporting and writing on topics from politics and the environment to violence in our cities, brings a focus and clarity to the issues of our day.

A high level of civic engagement was evident in Ms. Brackett from the start. She began her career as a social worker, political activist, and community organizer. Later, as a writer and reporter, she helped us understand and value the human dimension in stories, enabling us to feel connected to our communities through her compelling reports and penetrating interviews.

Chicago has been the great beneficiary of Ms. Brackett's career. She is a respected veteran of four Chicago TV news operations including 20 years as a full-time staff correspondent on "Chicago Tonight," where she continues to bring her talents to her new role as special correspondent, contributing stories based on extensive research.

She came to national prominence in 1984 as a correspondent for the PBS program, "The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer," where she won an Emmy Award for her reporting on the U.S. farm crisis.

Ms. Brackett's excellence has long been recognized and admired by her peers. She received a Peabody Award for her coverage of the American political landscape. The Chicago Headline Club, the nation's largest local chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists, twice honored Ms. Brackett with its Peter Lisagor Award for exemplary journalism.

Her stories on shortages in food pantries, gun violence in Chicago, and the plight of the unemployed have secured Ms. Brackett's legacy as a socially-conscious journalist. Her book, "Pay to Play: How Rod Blagojevich Turned Political Corruption into a National Sideshow," strengthened her legacy as a courageous investigative journalist.

Her unbounded determination was evident when, at age 50, Ms. Brackett began training as a triathlete. She became a four-time world champion, winning the ITU World Championship in her age group in 2009 through 2012, and finishing second in the world in 2013 and 2014. She is an inspiration to us all.

For her outstanding contributions to journalistic excellence and for exemplifying GSU's values of education, civic engagement, and the search for truth, the Board of Trustees is proud to award Elizabeth Brackett the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, honoris causa, and to welcome her to our community of inspirational scholars, artists, and educators.

