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**For Immediate Release**

## **Bob Petty to receive Doctor of Humane Letters at Governors State University Commencement**

University Park, May 23, 2005 – Long-time Chicago broadcaster Bob Petty will add a new title to his list of distinctions on June 5: Doctor of Humane Letters.

Petty, who became a familiar face to Chicago television viewers during Petty's 30 year career at WLS, Channel 7, will receive the honorary degree at Governors State University's Spring Commencement on Sunday, June 5.

Petty will address a crowd of 3,000, including new university graduates, their families and friends.

It will be the second Governors State degree Petty will have from the university: he earned his Master's in Communications from the institution in 1979.

In 1988, Petty hosted the award-winning "Racism on Campus," Governors State University's first national videoconference. In a year when racial tensions were running high on university campuses across the nation, Petty tackled the subject head on. He interviewed University of Wisconsin president Donna Shalala, later Secretary of Health and Human Services for the Clinton administration, and moderated a panel of national experts.

"We're particularly pleased Mr. Petty has accepted the university's invitation," said Dr. Paul Keys, provost for Governors State. "Apart from being a fine journalist, he broke down many of the barriers African Americans have faced, not only in the Chicago area, but in the country."

Keys noted that it was extremely rare to see an African American journalist on television when Petty started his career in the late 60s and early 70s.

He added that Petty broke through barriers by defying stereotype. "He was a consummate professional," Keys said. "He was a master of his craft, unyielding, professional, and successful."

Petty joined ABC 7 in Chicago in 1971. He started as a general assignment reporter and eventually became producer and host of "Weekend Edition."

Petty graduated with honors from Arizona State University in 1970. His concern for social issues led him to the University of Chicago, where he researched urban issues, including housing and public transportation.

In 1987, Petty was named as a William Benton Fellow at the University of Chicago.