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RE: Commencement 2019

To the John Jay College Community:

It is my pleasure to announce John Jay's 2019 honorary degree recipients. Each of these highly accomplished individuals exemplifies justice in action, and has dedicated their life's work to the advancement of a more humane, equitable, and effective system of justice.

Loretta Lynch is the former Attorney General of the United States in the Obama administration, and the first African American woman to hold this position. She has been at the forefront of the nation's most sensitive civil rights justice issues. From charging suspected shooter Dylann Roof with a hate crime after the Charleston church shooting, to advocating for reentry support systems for formerly incarcerated individuals coming home, she has demonstrated a fierce commitment to human dignity and civil rights. Prior to this appointment, Lynch led the U.S. Attorney's Office in Brooklyn, New York, where she prosecuted cases involving narcotics, violent crimes, public corruption, and civil rights. While in private practice, she served as special counsel to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, investigating human rights violations in the 1994 genocide.

Alex L. Calabrese, Chief Judge of the Red Hook Community Justice Center (RHCJC) in Brooklyn, New York, has spearheaded some of the most innovative, effective, and restorative approaches to criminal justice in recent times. He has transformed how the Brooklyn neighborhood of Red Hook responds to crime from the usual focus on punishment and retribution to one of restoration, reparation, and healing. The tools used by Judge Calabrese to solve neighborhood problems that come before the court include treatment and education programs, community service requirements, social support services, and therapy. The program has been shown to reduce recidivism and the number of people receiving jail sentences, while enhancing public confidence in the courts. His work has served as a model for similar community courts that offer a comprehensive and multi-jurisdictional approach to justice.

Both Loretta Lynch and Alex Calabrese will receive the honorary degrees of Doctor of Laws. We're thrilled that they're joining the John Jay community of scholars.

As a reminder, the College's 54th Commencement is on Wednesday, May 29 in the Louis Armstrong stadium, a newly renovated space with a retractable roof. We will again host two ceremonies, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The Graduate Hooding ceremony to celebrate our graduate students' achievements is on Thursday, May 23.

Commencement is a community celebration that shines a light of accomplishment on our students and their families and friends, as you can see in this [video](#) highlighting last year's ceremonies. Thank you to the John Jay community – faculty, students, and staff – for all your hard work during the year, and I look forward to seeing you at this year's ceremonies.

Enjoy your weekend.

Karol V. Mason
President