

Honorary Degree Going to Stevie Wonder

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Famed musician Stevie Wonder will be on stage for Tulane University Commencement 2011 to receive an honorary degree along with two internationally known journalists and a Nobel Prize winner.



Renowned musician and civil rights activist Stevie Wonder is among the luminaries who will receive an honorary Tulane degree at Commencement 2011. (Photo by Pete Souza, Wikipedia)

The [ceremony](#) will take place on May 12 in the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in downtown New Orleans. Degrees will be conferred on more than 2,000 students at the event.

In addition to Wonder, honorary degree recipients this year will be molecular biologist and Nobel Prize winner Walter Gilbert; journalist and author Cokie Roberts; and *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman, who also is this year's commencement speaker.

Recipients for honorary degrees are chosen through a process that involves the Board of Tulane and the University Senate, who consider nominations that are solicited from members of the Tulane community.

Wonder has nearly 50 Top 40 hits and more than 30 No. 1 hits in his performing career. He also is a civil rights activist whose work on behalf of famine relief in Africa and advocacy for ending apartheid in South Africa led to his designation as a U.N. Messenger of Peace.

Gilbert, an important member of the Human Genome Project, won the Nobel Prize in chemistry for development of a method to determine the sequence of nucleotide links in DNA and RNA.

Roberts is a native New Orleanian who is a contributing senior news analyst for NPR and ABC News. Friedman is a best-selling author and three-time Pulitzer Prize winner who has been the *New York Times* foreign affairs columnist since 1995.