



UNIVERSITY OF SAINT JOSEPH

CONNECTICUT

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**UNIVERSITY OF SAINT JOSEPH TO AWARD TWO HONORARY  
DEGREES AT MAY 7 COMMENCEMENT CEREMONIES**

WEST HARTFORD, Conn. (April 21, 2106) — The University of Saint Joseph (USJ) will award two honorary degrees at its 81<sup>st</sup> Commencement ceremonies on Saturday, May 7, 2016. This year's Commencement, divided into two events, will recognize one recipient at each ceremony. The undergraduate ceremony will take place at 10:00 a.m., and the graduate ceremony will take place at 3:00 p.m. Both events will be held in front of McDonough Hall on the University's West Hartford campus located at 1678 Asylum Avenue. Receiving honorary degrees are Suzy Whaley, Secretary of the Professional Golfers' Association of America (PGA), who will deliver the 2016 Commencement address at the undergraduate ceremony, and Sarita E. Brown, President, *Excelencia* in Education, who will deliver this year's Commencement address at the graduate ceremony. Both recipients reflect the University's values of leadership, service, and excellence in their respective fields.



**Suzy Whaley** is the first woman ever to be elected as an Officer (Secretary) of the Professional Golfers' Association of America (PGA). A member of the National PGA Board of Directors from 2011-2013, Whaley served as chair of the Junior Committee, co-chair of the Player

Development Committee, and on the Instruction and Diversity Committees. Recognized as a Top 50 golf instructor by *Golf Digest*, Whaley started at TPC River Highlands (Cromwell, CT) in 2005 as a PGA Teaching Professional before being promoted to Director of Instruction in 2013. From 2004-2006, she worked as an LPGA Golf Commentator for ESPN. A highly decorated golfer, Whaley was a member of the LPGA Tour in 1990 and 1993, and most famously qualified and participated in the 2003 Greater Hartford Open, becoming the first woman since Babe Zaharias in 1945 to qualify for an event on the PGA Tour. Among her many honors, the Connecticut PGA Section recognized Whaley as its PGA Teacher of the Year in 2004 and 2007, and as its Bill Strausbaugh Award recipient in 2003. She is a Volunteer Assistant Golf Coach for both the Quinnipiac University Women's Golf Team and the Farmington High School Girls' Golf Team.



**Sarita E. Brown** is President of *Excelencia* in Education, a not-for-profit organization accelerating Latino success in higher education by linking research, policy, and practice to serve Latino students. She has spent more than two decades at prominent national educational institutions and at the highest levels of government working to implement effective strategies to raise academic achievement and opportunity for low-income and minority students. Brown started her career at the University of Texas at Austin by building a national model promoting minority success in graduate education. Coming to the nation's capital in 1993 to work for educational associations, she was appointed Executive Director of the White House Initiative for Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, serving under President Bill Clinton and U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley. Maintaining her commitment to improving the quality of education, Brown applied her talents and experience to the not-for-profit sector and in 2004, co-founded *Excelencia* in Education. Brown currently serves on the Board of Directors of ACT, Catch the Next, Editorial Projects in Education, and *Excelencia* in Education.

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*The University of Saint Joseph (USJ) offers a wide range of graduate, undergraduate, and certificate programs that combine a professional and liberal arts education with a focus on service. Coeducational graduate master's and doctoral degree programs are taught on the University's two campuses in West Hartford and Hartford, Connecticut; at off-campus locations throughout the state; and online. Undergraduate programs for women and for coeducational adult students take place on our beautiful suburban campus and include more than 25 majors and seven pre-professional programs, each of which provides personal attention in a caring environment. Founded in 1932 by the Sisters of Mercy, the University of Saint Joseph welcomes students from diverse backgrounds and religious traditions. To learn more, view our website at [www.usj.edu](http://www.usj.edu).*

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