

Photo: President Joseph E. Aoun will confer honorary doctorates upon a group of influential leaders and figures at Northeastern's undergraduate Commencement ceremony. Amin J. Khoury, Tara Westover, Major General Cedric T. Wins, Eduardo J. Padrón, and Beth Stevens will receive the honorary degrees.

NORTHEASTERN TO AWARD FIVE HONORARY DEGREES AT 2019 COMMENCEMENT

News @ Northeastern

by **Khalida Sarwari** April 26, 2019

An accomplished entrepreneur, the president of Miami Dade College, a pioneering researcher in neurobiology, and a United States Army commander will receive honorary degrees at Northeastern University's 117th Commencement on May 3 at TD Garden in Boston.

President Joseph E. Aoun will confer honorary doctorates upon the group of influential leaders and figures at Northeastern's undergraduate ceremony, which will take place before a global audience of 20,000 people, including graduates, their families, and members of the university community.

The honorees are Amin J. Khoury, Eduardo J. Padrón, Beth Stevens, and Major General Cedric T. Wins.

They will be joined by Tara Westover, the *New York Times* best-selling author of *Educated*, who will give the Commencement address.

"This year we recognize a remarkable group of individuals whose achievements span the arc of human endeavor," said Joseph E. Aoun, president of Northeastern University.

"Their accomplishments in business, education, science, and military service are spires of excellence that epitomize personal and professional fulfillment. They are role models for all of us, and we are honored to have them as members of the Northeastern family."

AMIN J. KHOURY

Honorary Degree: Doctor of Entrepreneurship

From a challenging childhood that thrust him into the role of head of the household at age 11, Amin J. Khoury has made himself a transformative global entrepreneur and engaged civic leader.

A STORY OF LIFELONG LEARNING

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Beginning as a youth with a newspaper route and a shoestring scrap metal business and culminating with the founding and development of the multi-billion-dollar company BE Aerospace, Khoury is the quintessential business innovator.

Khoury led BE Aerospace, the leading global manufacturer and service provider of cabin interiors, for nearly 30 years before splitting it into two separate public companies in 2014, and subsequently selling both for approximately \$13 billion.

In the process, Khoury created a new public company, KLX Energy Services, a remaining, smaller business that Khoury hopes will eventually be a leading provider of oil field services.

A graduate of Northeastern's Executive MBA program in 1989, Khoury remains engaged with the university and its students as a trustee and supporter. In December 2018, Amin and his wife Julie made a game-changing gift to Northeastern, renaming the university's computer science school the Khoury College of Computer Sciences. Inspired by Northeastern's leadership in digital innovation, they endowed the college with \$50 million to support all aspects of the college's future focus.

In 2003, the couple created the Amin J. and Julie E. Khoury Endowed Scholarship Fund at Northeastern for technological entrepreneurial studies.

[Northeastern establishes the Khoury College of Computer Sciences](#)

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Khoury has served on several philanthropic boards in Florida and California, including as board vice chair of the Raymond F. Kravis Center for the Performing Arts in West Palm Beach, where he remains a life trustee.

EDUARDO J. PADRÓN

Honorary Degree: Doctor of Humane Letters

Eduardo J. Padrón is the president of Miami Dade College, the largest institution of higher education in America with more than 165,000 students. Under his leadership, Miami Dade has received national recognition for its longstanding involvement with its urban community.

Padrón arrived in the United States as a Cuban refugee in 1961. He graduated from what was then Miami-Dade Community College, joined its faculty in 1970, and has been the school's president since 1995. He will step down this summer.

His achievements have been recognized nationally and globally. President Barack Obama awarded him the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2016 for being a prominent national voice for access and inclusion in higher education. In 2011, he was awarded the Carnegie Corporation Centennial Academic Leadership award and *The Washington Post* named him one of the eight most influential college presidents in the United States. In 2009, *Time* included him on its list of "The 10 Best College Presidents."

Internationally, Padrón's accomplishments have been recognized by numerous nations including Argentina, France, Morocco, Poland, and Spain. He currently serves on the boards of the Council on Foreign Relations, the Urban Institute, the International Association of University Presidents, and Achieving the Dream.

Padrón earned his doctorate in economics from the University of Florida.

BETH STEVENS

Honorary Degree: Doctor of Science

Beth Stevens is a pioneer in neurobiology research whose inspired work on one little-studied aspect of the brain's immune system has yielded significant insights into the mechanism behind diseases such as autism, schizophrenia, and Alzheimer's.

Stevens, an associate professor in the Department of Neurology at Harvard Medical School and a Northeastern alumna, won a 2015 MacArthur Fellowship for her breakthrough discoveries on microglia. She showed that the cell type, once considered to simply be part of the brain's immune defense, plays a critical role in shaping brain circuits.

Among her awards and honors, Stevens is a recipient of the 2008 Smith Family Award for Excellence in Biomedical Research, a 2010 Dana Foundation Award, and a 2010 Ellison Medical Foundation New Scholar in Aging award. She received the coveted Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers in 2012.

In addition to her position at Harvard Medical School, she is on the faculty of the F.M. Kirby Neurobiology Center at Boston Children's Hospital, and a member of the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard.

Stevens earned her bachelor's degree in medical laboratory science from Northeastern in 1993 and a doctorate in neuroscience from the University of Maryland, College Park, in 2003. She completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the Stanford University School of Medicine in 2008.

MAJOR GENERAL CEDRIC T. WINS

Honorary Degree: Doctor of Public Service

Maj. Gen. Cedric T. Wins is the commanding officer of the United States Army Combat Capabilities Development Command, which pursues research and development that will

provide decisive technological advantages to American forces operating in current and future combat environments.

Among his previous roles, Wins served as director of force development in the office of the United States Army's deputy chief of staff. He has also served with the Headquarters Department of the Army and the Joint Staff at the Pentagon, as well as on the strategic planning staff of the United States Special Operations Command at MacDill Air Force Base in Florida.

In his more than 30 years of service, Wins has held leadership and staff assignments with the 7th Infantry Division at Fort Ord in California, the 2nd Infantry Division in Korea, and the 4th Infantry Division at Fort Hood, Texas. He has been deployed overseas in Egypt and Afghanistan.

Wins has earned numerous honors from the Army, including the Distinguished Service Medal, the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Bronze Star Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, and the Army Commendation Medal with Two Oak Leaf Clusters.

He earned his bachelor's degree in economics from the Virginia Military Institute and holds master's degrees from the Florida Institute of Technology and the National War College.

TARA WESTOVER

Honorary Degree: Doctor of Humane Letters

Tara Westover's *New York Times* bestselling memoir *Educated* recounts her decade-long struggle to reconcile her bonds to family and her father's insular worldview with her emerging desire for learning and autonomy.

Westover was raised as a survivalist with her six siblings in a remote Idaho community by parents who mistrusted the federal government

**TARA WESTOVER, INSPIRING AUTHOR
OF THE BEST-SELLING MEMOIR,
EDUCATED, TO DELIVER
NORTHEASTERN'S 2019
COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS**

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and what her father viewed as its institutions for societal control: the healthcare system and formal schooling.

She graduated magna cum laude from Brigham Young University in 2008, and subsequently won a scholarship to study at the University of Cambridge in England. In 2009, Westover earned a Master of Philosophy from Trinity College, Cambridge, and spent the

following year as a visiting fellow at Harvard University. She returned to Cambridge, where she was awarded a doctorate in intellectual history in 2014.

Westover was recently named to *Time's* list of the "100 Most Influential People of 2019." Her memoir has received a plethora of honors, among them being named a finalist for the 2019 Jean Stein Book Award bestowed by PEN America and being named one of the 10 Best Books of 2018 by *The New York Times*.

For media inquiries, please contact media@northeastern.edu.

TOPICS

Campus & Community, Students, Amin J. Khoury, Beth Stevens, Eduardo J. Padrón, Educated, Joseph E. Aoun, Major General Cedric T. Wins, Northeastern honorary degrees, Northeastern University 2019 Commencement, Tara Westover

CREDITS

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