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USF AWARDS HONORARY DOCTORATE TO EUGENE PATTERSON

ST. PETERSBURG, FL (April 18, 1986) — Eugene C. Patterson, chief executive officer and chairman of the board of the Times Publishing Company, will receive an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters at the Spring Commencement of the University of South Florida at St. Petersburg, according to Acting Dean Samuel Fustukjian.

The honorary doctorate will be the first conferred at USF St. Petersburg since the campus was founded in 1965, Fustukjian said.

Patterson, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and civil rights advocate, will also deliver the commencement address at the ceremony, which begins at 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 3 in Poynter Park on Bayboro Harbor.

"This honorary doctorate recognizes Gene Patterson's lifelong commitment to journalism ethics, education, civil rights and community advancement," Fustukjian said. "The University of South Florida is honored to join with 12 other educational institutions, including Harvard, Emory and Duke, who have saluted his contributions with an honorary degree."

Patterson and the Times Publishing Company have consistently promoted the education of mass communications students at USF and other institutions through internship programs, donation of materials and equipment and funding of a variety of scholarships. Other USF departments have also received support through Times Publishing Company grants, including marine science, fine arts and the Nelson Poynter Library.

In addition to his publishing duties, Patterson is chairman of the board of the Poynter Institute for Media Studies, an institution offering advanced and continuing education courses for journalism students and working professionals. His career history includes serving as a professor of political science, journalism and public affairs at Duke University in 1971.

He won the Pulitzer Prize in 1966 for editorials written in support of the civil rights movement while he was editor of the Atlanta Constitution. He has also been presented with the Society of Professional Journalists Fellow Award (1979), the William Allen White National Award for journalistic merit (1980), the National Press Photographers' Association Editor of the Year Award (1982), the Women in Communications, Inc. National Headliner Award (1982), the B'nai B'rith International Great American Traditions Award (1984) and the American Civil Liberties Union Foundation of Florida's Nelson Poynter Civil Liberties Award (1985).