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Chris Holtmann, a 1994 Taylor University alumnus who coached the Butler men's basketball team to national rankings and a Sweet 16 appearance last season, will serve as the featured speaker for Taylor's commencement ceremonies, scheduled for 10 am, May 20, in the Kesler Student Activities Center (KSAC).

In addition to the graduation of 426 Taylor students, the day's highlights include the presentation of an honorary doctorate to former Taylor First Lady Marylou Habecker.

A 1994 graduate of Taylor University, Holtmann played three years for Taylor's Trojans, achieving all-American honors and leading the team to a number one national ranking during his senior season. After graduation, Holtmann served as a member of Taylor's coaching staff for five years before assistant coaching jobs at Gardner-Webb and Ohio University.

After a successful head coaching job at Gardner-Webb, Holtmann joined the Butler University coaching staff as an assistant, and was promoted to head coach in 2014. His record after three seasons is 70-31, including a 25-9 mark during the recently-completed 2016-17 season. Butler's 2016-17 season included a 14-5 regular-season record against 12 teams that made the 2017 tournament field, including two wins over defending national champion Villanova, and the team advanced to the Sweet 16 for the first time since 2011.

Holtmann has won numerous coaching honors including: the 2016-17 BIG EAST Coach of the Year, and the John McLendon Award, presented annually by CollegeInsider.com to college basketball's coach of the year. Additionally, for the second time in his three seasons at Butler, Holtmann was named a finalist for the Jim Phelan National Coach of the Year Award. He was also a 2014-15 Naismith National Coach of the Year Finalist.

Marylou Habecker served as Taylor University's First Lady for 11 years. During that time, she hosted hundreds of Taylor students in the Muselman House (Taylor's presidential home), participated in numerous student activities, and mentored hundreds of Taylor women.

She has served on the boards of Taylor University, Nyack College, Alliance Theological Seminary. She also held board memberships for New York City's Museum of Biblical Art, Our Town Upland, Inc., Project Mercy, Inc., and Overseas Council. Habecker is an active speaker and writer, having written articles and devotionals for Christian publications such as, *Today's Christian Woman* and *The War Cry*.

In 2015, she received the G. Roselyn Kerlin Women in Leadership Award from Taylor University. She holds degrees in education from Taylor and Ball State Universities.

The 426 students comprising Taylor's 2017 graduating class include:

- 17 Master of Arts degrees in Higher Education and Student Development
- 3 Master of Business Administration degrees
- 209 Bachelor of Arts degrees
- 187 Bachelor of Science degrees
- 4 Bachelor of Music degrees
- 4 Bachelor of Business Administration degrees
- 3 receive Associate of Arts degrees
- 1 graduate is completing the requirements for two Bachelor degrees
- 37 Bachelor degree recipients are completing the requirements for at least two majors

The class of 2017 comes from 31 states in the United States and 21 foreign countries including: Bahamas, Belarus, Bolivia, Canada, China, Congo, Dominican Republic, Germany, Greece, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, India, Japan, Kenya, Lithuania, Nigeria, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Ukraine.

Two-hundred-forty-eight Baccalaureate degree recipients have earned graduation honors:

- 74 have attained Summa Cum Laude honors;
- 102 have achieved Magna Cum Laude honors and
- 72 have earned Cum Laude honors.
- 9 undergraduates could graduate with a perfect 4.0 grade point average during their years at Taylor

The graduates of the class of 2017 will join 23,764 previous graduates of Taylor University.

In addition, 65 percent of the graduating class have had at least one overseas study or service experience during their Taylor studies.



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