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Public Affairs, Roger Williams University

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# Award-Winning Creator of WaterFire Barnaby Evans to Deliver Commencement Address

U.S. Secretary of Labor Thomas E. Perez to deliver law school address



April 7, 2016 | Public Affairs Staff

**BRISTOL, R.I.** – Award-winning multimedia artist [Barnaby Evans](#) – whose stunning, immersive sculpture [WaterFire](#) has been recognized as an important contribution to the cultural renaissance of downtown Providence and has been re-created in cities around the world – will address the Roger Williams University Class of 2016 and receive an honorary doctorate at the University’s Commencement ceremony on Saturday, May 14. The ceremony will begin at 10 a.m. on the University’s main athletic field on the Bristol Campus at One Old Ferry Road.

The University will also award an honorary doctorate to Umberto Crenca, founding artistic director of AS220, the vibrant nonprofit community arts center based in Providence. Visionary architect and planner William D. Warner, who died in 2012, and is credited with reimagining the reshaping of downtown Providence, will receive a posthumous honorary doctorate.

University President Donald J. Farish says the Providence theme at this year’s commencement is very deliberate, from celebrating the achievements of scores of students who have participated in Community Partnerships Center, Community Development, and service-learning projects in Providence to the opening of RWU’s new building at One Empire Plaza.

“In what has been a year of transformation for Roger Williams University, with our increased commitment to Providence and urban Rhode Island, it is an honor to recognize three individuals whose contributions to the revitalization of Providence during the last three decades personify a commitment to improve the quality of life for all Rhode Islanders,” says University President Donald J. Farish. “As a university whose core purpose is to strengthen society through engaged teaching and learning, we look to these honorees as examples of how innovation is achieved through collaboration and community engagement.”

A day earlier, U.S. Secretary of Labor Thomas E. Perez – the former attorney general for civil rights at the U.S. Department of Justice and director of the Office of Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services who, in his role as the nation’s 26th secretary of labor, has pioneered efforts to create a living wage for workers and protect workers’ retirement savings – will deliver the Commencement address and be awarded an honorary degree at the Roger Williams University School of Law ceremony.

The law school ceremony will begin at 1 p.m. on Friday, May 13, also on the University’s main athletic field. The School of Law will also present honorary degrees to the Honorable Haiganush R. Bedrosian, the retired Chief Justice of the Rhode Island Family Court and first woman to serve in that role; RWU Professor of Law Anthony J. Santoro, founding dean of Roger Williams University School of Law and Widener Law School and former President of Roger Williams University; and the Honorable Michael A. Silverstein, Associate Justice of the Rhode Island Superior Court and member of the Commission on Judicial Tenure and Discipline.