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Award-Winning Actor and Author Hill Harper to Deliver UVI Commencement Addresses in May

Hill Harper, acclaimed actor, best-selling author, and humanitarian, will deliver the keynote at UVI's 2025 commencement ceremonies and receive an honorary doctorate for his work in social justice, education, entrepreneurship, and the arts.

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Hill Harper By. UVI

The University of the Virgin Islands has announced that Hill Harper—acclaimed actor, best-selling author, entrepreneur, and humanitarian—will deliver the keynote address at the University's 2025 commencement ceremonies. The ceremonies are scheduled for Thursday, May 15 at 1:00 p.m. on the Albert A. Sheen Campus on St. Croix and Friday, May 16 at 1:00 p.m. at

the Elridge W. Blake Sports and Fitness Center on the Orville E. Kean Campus on St. Thomas.

Harper, widely recognized for his roles in television and film including “The Good Doctor,” “CSI: NY,” “He Got Game,” and “Lackawanna Blues,” has built a career that extends far beyond the screen. He is known for his national advocacy in civil rights and social justice, serving as a spokesperson for organizations such as The Lawyer’s Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, The Innocence Project, One Fair Wage, and Big Brothers Big Sisters. Harper also serves on the Board of Directors for the National Black Bank Fund and is the Honorary National Co-Chair for the Redevelopment of Black Wall Street.

As an author, Harper has penned four New York Times bestsellers: *Letters to a Young Brother*, *Letters to a Young Sister*, *Letters to an Incarcerated Brother*, and *The Conversation*. His book *The Wealth Cure* explores closing the racial wealth gap through financial literacy. His literary and acting contributions have earned him seven NAACP Image Awards.

Harper’s academic credentials are equally impressive. He holds a Bachelor of Arts from Brown University, graduating magna cum laude and as valedictorian of his department. He went on to receive a Juris Doctor, cum laude, from Harvard Law School and a Master’s in Public Administration from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. He has also been awarded ten honorary doctorates from institutions including Howard University, Providence College, and Dillard University.

In the world of business, Harper is the owner of The Roasting Plant, a Detroit-based coffee franchise, and co-founder of A-Frame Brands. He is a co-owner of the award-winning International House hotel in New Orleans and a board member of LOVED01, a skincare brand founded by John Legend. Harper is also involved in both commercial and residential real estate development. He is a Life Member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

“We are honored to welcome Hill Harper as this year’s commencement speaker,” said UVI President Dr. Safiya George. “His remarkable career and dedication to social and economic justice make him an exemplary role model for our graduates. We look forward to his inspiring words as we celebrate the achievements of the Class of 2025.”

As part of the commencement ceremonies, the University will confer upon Hill Harper an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters in recognition of his outstanding accomplishments across a wide spectrum of fields.