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Georgia Southern University to host award-winning journalists Ted Koppel, Mara Liasson and Eugene Robinson on March 23

JANUARY 21, 2016

Georgia Southern University will host professional journalists Ted Koppel, Mara Liasson and Eugene Robinson to discuss “2016 Elections: Voting as an Informed Citizen” on Wednesday, March 23, 7 p.m., at Hanner Fieldhouse. The panel of speakers is part of the University’s Leadership Lecture Series, developed to expose students to insights from world-class leaders.

“We could not be more excited to welcome Ted Koppel, Mara Liasson and Eugene Robinson to Georgia Southern University,” said Teresa Thompson, Ph.D., the University’s vice president for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management. “At Georgia Southern, our goal is to integrate learning, service and leadership to empower our students to become global citizens who lead with a lifelong commitment to service. This panel of speakers will certainly open the eyes of our students to the current political climate and help to educate them on the issues they will be voting on in the fall.”



Ted Koppel

During more than 50 years working as a professional journalist, Ted Koppel has embodied the term “eyewitness to history” through his coverage of important historical events including President John F. Kennedy’s funeral, Barry Goldwater’s presidential campaign and Martin Luther King Jr.’s civil rights march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, to name a few. He also has been on the front lines of a succession of ten conflicts as an ABC News war correspondent, beginning with Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia and finally as an embedded correspondent with the 3rd Armored Infantry Division during the invasion of Iraq. Koppel also covered President Richard Nixon’s historic visit to the People’s Republic of China, was with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev inside the Kremlin on the last day of the Soviet Union and was the first journalist to interview Nelson Mandela upon his release from 26 years in a South

African prison. Over the course of 26 years as anchor and managing editor of Nightline, Koppel became the longest-serving news anchor in U.S. broadcast history. He currently serves as commentator and non-fiction book reviewer for National Public Radio. He is also a contributing columnist to The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal and The Washington Post.

In 2012, New York University named Koppel one of the “100 outstanding journalists in the United States in the last 100 years.” When he left ABC News after 42 years, he was the most honored reporter in that network’s history, having received more “Overseas Press Club” awards than the previous record holder, Edward R. Murrow, and eight “George Foster Peabody” awards. Koppel has won 12 Columbia-DuPont awards, television’s equivalent to the Pulitzer Prize. He has also been awarded 42 Emmys, including one for lifetime achievement.

Mara Liasson is the national political correspondent for National Public Radio (NPR) and a contributor to FOX News Channel. Liasson joined NPR in 1985 as a general assignment reporter and newscaster, covering Congress and serving as the White House correspondent during all eight years of the Clinton administration. Now, as the national political correspondent her reports can be heard on the award-winning newsmagazines, “All Things Considered” and “Morning Edition.” During her tenure, she has covered each presidential election since 1992 and reported on Senate and House races every election year. Following a leave of absence to attend Columbia University, she returned to NPR as its congressional correspondent. Liasson received a Bagehot



Mara Liasson



Eugene Robinson

her reporting, including the White House Correspondents’ “Association Merriman Smith Award” in 1994, 1995 and 1997 for excellence in daily news reporting.

Eugene Robinson, a Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist for The Washington Post, was born and raised in Orangeburg, South Carolina. He remembers the culminating years of the Civil Rights Movement—the “Orangeburg Massacre.” He was educated at Orangeburg High School, where he was one of a handful of African-American students on the previously all white campus; and the University of Michigan, where during his senior year he was the first black student to be named co-editor-in-chief of the award-winning student newspaper, The Michigan Daily. His

experiences and his remarkable storytelling ability have won him wide acclaim, most notably as the winner of the 2009 Pulitzer

Prize for his commentary on the 2008 presidential race.

Robinson began his journalism career at The San Francisco Chronicle, where he was one of two reporters assigned to cover the trial of kidnapped newspaper heiress Patricia Hearst. He went on to work at The Washington Post, and in his three decades with the newspaper, he has been city hall reporter, city editor, foreign correspondent in Buenos Aires and London, foreign editor and assistant managing editor in charge of the paper's award winning Style section. He has written books about race in Brazil and music in Cuba, covered a heavyweight championship fight, witnessed riots in Philadelphia, sat with presidents, dictators and the Queen of England, thrusted and parried with hair-proud politicians from sea to shining sea, handicapped three editions of American Idol, acquired fluent Spanish and passable Portuguese and even, thanks to his two sons, come to an uneasy truce with hip-hop culture. During the 1987-88 academic year, on leave from The Post, Robinson was a Nieman Fellow in Journalism at Harvard University. In 2010, Robinson was elected to the Pulitzer Prize Board. He is a member of the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) and the NABJ Hall of Fame. He is currently a regular contributor to MSNBC.

This impressive panel of leaders joins a distinguished panel of leaders to appear at Georgia Southern's Leadership Lecture Series which includes Archie Manning, former first lady Laura Bush, former President Jimmy Carter and first lady Rosalynn Carter, former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and political consultants James Carville and Mary Matalin.

Complimentary tickets are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Students may pick up tickets Feb. 29 through March 8, faculty and staff tickets are available March 3 through 8, and members of the local community may pick up their tickets March 7 and 8 at locations in Statesboro and Savannah. Tickets will not be available at the door the evening of the event. For more information on ticket distribution, please visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu/SpeakerSpotlight.

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