



DILLARD
UNIVERSITY

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ACTRESS AND PRODUCER REGINA HALL TO
DELIVER DILLARD UNIVERSITY 2019 COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS**

NEW ORLEANS –Dillard University will hold its 83rd Commencement on Saturday, May 11, at 8 a.m., on the historic Avenue of The Oaks. Dillard is elated to announce that Regina Hall will be the 2019 Commencement Speaker. Hall is the first African-American woman to win the New York Film Critics Circle choice for Best Actress.

Known for her unassuming yet clever sense of humor, Regina Hall graduated from Fordham University with an English degree and later enrolled in New York University's Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute to receive her master's degree in Journalism. Her dreams of becoming a journalist came to a halt when her father died from a stroke. His death made Hall realize it's important to pursue goals that aligned with her spirit. With two degrees en tote, at the age of 27, Hall decided to audition for acting roles after successfully booking commercial and guest roles on primetime television. In 1999, Hall landed the witty and unforgettable role of Candy in Malcolm D. Lee's *The Best Man*. It was then, Hollywood began to notice the humor Hall brought to films no matter the genre or plot.

"I am very excited to welcome Regina Hall to Dillard. She has degrees in English and Journalism, has been a college professor, and now a 20 year career in entertainment," said Dillard University President Dr. Walter M. Kimbrough. "The last few years have established her as a force, from the critically acclaimed Showtime series *Black Monday*, to the New Orleans based hit *Girls Trip*, and with the current comedy *Little* out now with *Shaft* coming out this summer, she's one of the hottest actresses today. She definitely has a message for our graduates."

Most recently, Hall executive produced *Little* for Universal Studios, alongside *Girls Trip* producer Will Packer, *Black-ish* creator and actress, Kenya Barris and Marsai Martin. Hall also starred in Showtime's up and coming hit series, *Black Monday* with Don Cheadle and Seth Rogen. This summer Hall will also star in the remake of the iconic 1971 (and 2000) movie, *Shaft*. In 2018 Hall received rave reviews for her role in the independent film *Support the Girls*, leading Hall to be nominated for "Best Actress" by The Gotham Independent Film Awards and "Best Female Lead" by the Independent Spirit Awards. Hall garnered much attention in 2017 when she appeared alongside Queen Latifah, Jada Pinkett Smith and Tiffany Haddish in 2017 film *Girls Trip*. The film earned over \$140 million worldwide and showcased films with predominantly Black cast members to sell out theatres.

Dillard is known for bringing in leading influencers throughout the world to be Commencement speakers or to participate in the President's Lecture Series Brain Food. The University considers itself a place that not only educates some of the country's top scholars and leaders, but a place where the community can come and learn.

For more information about Regina Hall and the 2019 Commencement Service, please contact Dr. Sheryl Kennedy Haydel (shaydel@dillard.edu) and Lauren R.D. Fox (lfox@dillard.edu).

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Dillard University, located in New Orleans at 2601 Gentilly Blvd., is a private four-year liberal arts historically black institution with a history dating back to 1869. For more information, please visit www.dillard.edu. Also, follow us on Twitter, Facebook @DU1869 and Instagram: Dillard University.