

## **Renowned poet and AU alumnus to deliver commencement address**

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Marvin H. Bell, one of Alfred University's most celebrated alumni, will deliver this year's commencement address at 10 a.m. May 18 in McLane Center. Bell, author of 17 books of poetry and essays, is a longtime member of the faculty of the Writers' Workshop at the University of Iowa, where he is the Flannery O'Connor Professor of Letters. Booklist calls him "one of our finest and most acclaimed poets," and the State of Iowa named him its first poet laureate in 2000. "We are delighted that Marvin Bell accepted our invitation to deliver our commencement address this year," said Dr. Charles M. Edmondson, Alfred University president. "His accomplishments as a poet and as a teacher should be an inspiration to our graduates." His latest book, *Nightworks: Poems 1962-2000*, was published in September 2000 by Copper Canyon Press. His second book of poetry, *A Probable Volume of Dreams*, won the Lamont Award from the Academy of American Poets. Another, *Stars Which See, Stars Which Do Not See*, was a finalist for the National Book Award. In his last three books, Bell has employed a poetic form not seen before. Judith Kitchen, writing in the *Georgia Review*, said, "These new books by Marvin Bell are doing to poetry what has occasionally been done before - sending it into new and original territory. Bell has redefined poetry as it is being practiced today." His literary honors also include awards from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Guggenheim Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Bell previously taught at Goddard College and the Universities of Hawaii and Washington, held Senior Fulbright appointments to Yugoslavia and Australia, and visited numerous colleges and universities, both as a Lila Wallace - Reader's Digest Writing Fellow and as a Woodrow Wilson Fellow. He reads and lectures widely, both in this country and abroad, and his appearances include the White House, the Folger Shakespeare Library and the Guggenheim Museum. His poems have appeared in such magazines as the *New Yorker*, the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *New Republic*, *Harvard Review*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *The Nation*, *Poetry*, the *American Poetry Review*, the *Virginia Quarterly Review*, the *Kenyon Review*, and the *Gettysburg Review*. He is widely anthologized and his writing has also been set to music and dance. For a number of years, Bell wrote an influential column, entitled "Homage to the Runner," for *The American Poetry Review*, and has edited poetry for *The North American Review* and *The Iowa Review*. Bell has served on the boards and panels of the National Endowment for the Arts, the American Research Institute for the Arts and the Academy of American Poets, as well as other organizations. Born in New York City, Bell was raised in Center Moriches, and came to AU as an English major. Following graduation from Alfred University, he did graduate work in journalism at Syracuse University and later took degrees in literature and writing, first at the University of Chicago and later at the University of Iowa. He joined the faculty of the Writers' Workshop in 1965, and continues to teach one semester each academic year for the Workshop. Alfred University awarded him an honorary doctorate in 1986.