



News

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Steve Blank, entrepreneur, educator and author, to speak at Philadelphia University's Commencement on Sunday, May 15 at the Mann Center for the Performing Arts

Tomio Taki, a leader in textile and apparel manufacturing, also will be awarded the honorary degree Doctor of Humane Letters

PHILADELPHIA, April 13, 2011 – Steven G. Blank, an award-winning educator, author and entrepreneur, will speak at Philadelphia University's Commencement on Sunday, May 15, at 11 a.m. at the Mann Center for the Performing Arts. He will be awarded the honorary degree Doctor of Humane Letters.

Tomio Taki, a leader in textile and apparel manufacturing whose company at one time owned designer firms Anne Klein & Company and The Donna Karan Company, also will be honored with the honorary Doctor of Humane Letters.

A serial entrepreneur, Blank has founded eight companies involving software development, workstation development, computer peripherals, military intelligence systems, semiconductors and video game development. The firms include E.piphany, MIPS Computers, Convergent Technologies, ESL and Rocket Science Games.

Blank teaches at Stanford University's School of Engineering, the University of California-Berkeley Haas School of Business and the UC-Berkeley/Columbia University Joint Executive MBA program. He recently authored *Four Steps to the Epiphany*, a comprehensive resource for new and seasoned entrepreneurs, and writes a widely read blog on topics ranging from education to entrepreneurship.

“Steve Blank's success as an entrepreneur and educator makes him a perfect role model for Philadelphia University's graduates, who are entering a world in which they will need to work across disciplines and apply their knowledge in creative and innovative ways to come up with solutions to complex problems,” said Philadelphia University President Stephen Spinelli Jr. “The principles of multidisciplinary learning, innovative problem-solving and leadership are fundamental to the Philadelphia University educational model, and Steve Blank's knowledge and experience across a range of disciplines will offer inspiration and insights for our graduates.”

“I’m honored to be the Commencement speaker at the University whose motto is “Power to Do” and that is the model university for professional education in the 21st century,” Blank said.

“Students graduating today face a very different job market from the one their parents saw in the last century—it’s harder, tougher and more unpredictable,” he continued. “Most college graduates will be working in jobs that never existed when their parents graduated. But Philadelphia University students have a competitive edge in the 21st century. They’ve been prepared by a University dedicated not only to making them ready for change—but primed to be innovators and the agents of change.”

In a blog post from Feb. 15, Blank wrote that Philadelphia University’s new College of Design, Engineering and Commerce, with its emphasis on interdisciplinary, collaborative teaching and learning, problem-solving and real-world projects, “may be pioneering one of the new models of undergraduate professional education.” To read Blank’s full post, go to <http://www.businessinsider.com/college-and-business-will-never-be-the-same-2011-2>.

In 2010, Blank received the Earl F. Cheit Outstanding Teaching Award from the Berkeley/Columbia MBA program, and in 2009 he earned Stanford’s Undergraduate Teaching Award in Management Science and Engineering. He was honored as one of the “10 Influencers in Silicon Valley” by the *San Jose Mercury News*.

At age 26, Tomio Taki became president of Takihyo Co., Ltd., a Japanese textile manufacturer established by his family more than 250 years ago. He remains an advisor to the company, which is now publicly traded and manufactures ready-to-wear apparel lines as well as textiles, and includes 24 subsidiary companies including food processing, real estate and chemical products. In 1974, he formed Takihyo Inc., which became sole owner of Anne Klein & Company and a partner in The Donna Karan Company. Today, Tomio Taki is a managing member of Takihyo LLC., an independent U.S. entity.

Some 700 undergraduate and graduate students will receive diplomas at the 2011 Commencement ceremony, which will be held at the Mann Center for the Performing Arts in Philadelphia’s Fairmount Park at 11 a.m. on Sunday, May 15. For more information, go to <http://www.philau.edu/commencement/>.

Philadelphia University, founded in 1884, is a private university with 3,500 students enrolled in more than 60 undergraduate and graduate programs. As the model for professional university education for the 21st century, the University prepares students to be leaders in their professions, in an active, collaborative and real-world learning environment with a strong foundation in the liberal arts. Philadelphia University includes Schools of Architecture, Business Administration, Design and Engineering, Liberal Arts and Science and Health.