

**BOARD OF REGENTS**  
EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

RECOMMENDATION

SECTION: 9

DATE:

October 20, 2009

Commencement Speaker and Honorary Degree

ACTION REQUESTED

It is recommended that the Board of Regents approve Greg Mathis, retired Michigan 36th District Court judge and syndicated television show judge, as Commencement Speaker at the Sunday, December 20, 2009 commencement ceremony. In addition, it is recommended that the Board award an honorary Doctor of Public Service to Judge Mathis.

SUMMARY

Judge Mathis' biography follows on the next page.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

None

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION

The proposed Board action has been reviewed and it is recommended for Board approval.

\_\_\_\_\_  
University Executive Officer  
Provost and Executive Vice President

9-29-2009

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Biographical Sketch – Greg Mathis



Greg Mathis (born April 5, 1960) is a retired Michigan 36th District Court judge and syndicated television show judge. His show Judge Mathis is produced by Telepictures Productions, and distributed by Warner Brothers.

Judge Mathis who dropped out of school, was in and out of jail, yet overcame these adversities to become the youngest judge in Michigan history. As a teenager growing up in the housing projects of Detroit, Mathis was well on his way to a life of crime.

But, as a promise to his dying mother, Mathis vowed to change his ways. At age 18, he turned his life around – first by returning to school and earning his GED (high school equivalency). With the help of a close family friend, Mathis was admitted to Eastern Michigan university, where he discovered a new interest in politics and public administration. He received his B.S. degree from EMU in 1984, and a Juris Doctorate degree from the University of Detroit in 1988. Despite insurmountable obstacles and odds, Mathis was elected a Superior Court Judge for Michigan's 36th District. Judge Mathis and his wife, Linda Reese Mathis, live in Beverly Hills, California. Linda Reese Mathis received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Education from Eastern Michigan University in 1985. Judge Mathis received the Alumnus Achievement Award from EMU in 2002.

Judge Mathis brings an entirely unique perspective to his dealings with people. He's compassionate, yet street smart, and not about to tolerate disregard for the law. He runs his courtroom with a very no-nonsense style, often using himself as an example to those who appear before him.