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Ted Kooser to address 1,450 UNL graduates at Dec. 18 commencement

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Office of University Communications
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

WHEN: Saturday, Dec. 18

WHERE: Bob Devaney Sports Center, 1600 Court Street



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Lincoln, Neb., December 8th, 2004 —

Ted Kooser, poet laureate of the United States and professor of English in the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Arts and Sciences, will give the address and receive an honorary doctor of letters degree at UNL commencement exercises Dec. 18 at the Bob Devaney Sports Center, 1600 Court St.

Chancellor Harvey Perlman will preside over the 9:30 a.m. ceremony. Approximately 1,450 students will receive degrees.

Because of construction of the Antelope Valley Project south of the Devaney Center (including the closing of Court Street on the south side of the building), those planning to attend commencement exercises are urged to use the 27th Street entrance to State Fair Park to get to the ceremony. Shuttle buses will be available for transportation from parking lots to the Devaney Center.

Kooser was named poet laureate (officially the Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress) Aug. 12 by James H. Billington, Librarian of Congress, and began his duties on Oct. 7. Previous poets laureate include Robert Frost, Gwendolyn Brooks and Rita Dove.

The author of 10 collections of poetry and prose including "Local Wonders, Seasons in the Bohemian Alps," (2002) published by University of Nebraska Press, Kooser was born in Ames, Iowa, in 1939 and attended public school there before earning his bachelor's degree at Iowa State University (1962). He taught school for one year before moving to Nebraska to pursue graduate school. He received his master's degree at the University of Nebraska in 1968. He has lived all of his life in Nebraska and Iowa and worked for 35 years in the life insurance business, retiring in 1999 as a vice president.

Kooser's most recent work is an upcoming University of Nebraska Press book, "The Poetry Home Repair Manual," due out soon, following "Delights & Shadows" (2004). His other collections of poetry include "Sure Signs" (1980), which received the Society of Midland Authors Prize for the best book of poetry by a Midwestern writer published in that year; "One World at a Time" (1985); "Weather Central" (1994); and "Winter Morning Walks: One Hundred Postcards to Jim Harrison" (2000), winner of the 2001 Nebraska Book Award for Poetry. "Local Wonders" also won the Nebraska Book Award for Nonfiction in 2003. The book was also chosen as the Best Book Written by a Midwestern Writer for 2002 by Friends of American Writers, and it won the Gold Award for Autobiography in ForeWord Magazine's Book of the Year Awards.

Kooser is also the author, with his longtime friend Jim Harrison, of "Braided Creek: A Conversation in Poetry" (2003), for which the two poets received the 2003 Award for Poetry from the Society of Midland Authors. Among Kooser's other awards and honors are two National Endowment for the Arts fellowships, the Pushcart Prize, the Stanley Kunitz Prize, the James Boatwright Prize and a Merit Award from the Nebraska Arts Council.

Doctoral candidates will be honored in a hooding ceremony at 3:30 p.m. Dec. 17 at Kimball Recital Hall, 11th and R streets (extended). Doctoral candidates will receive their diplomas at the Dec. 18 commencement exercises at the Devaney Center.

A drop-off area for graduates and mobility-restricted guests will be available on the south side of the Devaney Center on Dec. 18. Sign language interpreters for hearing impaired individuals will be provided on-screen by HuskerVision. Guests in

wheelchairs will be seated on the northeast corner of the arena floor. Golf carts will be located at the ramps on the exterior north and south sides of the Devaney Center to assist disabled guests entering and leaving the building.

Admission is free to both ceremonies, and tickets are not required. The Dec. 18 commencement exercises will also be streamed live on the UNL [Web site \(http://www.unl.edu\)](http://www.unl.edu).

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Associated Media Files:

- [Ted Kooser photo \(http://ucommxsr1.unl.edu/downloadables/photo/20041208kooser.jpg\)](http://ucommxsr1.unl.edu/downloadables/photo/20041208kooser.jpg)



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