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University Relations

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**U.S. Rep. Keith Ellison will address this year's graduating seniors**

*Summary: U.S. Rep. Keith Ellison will address this year's graduating seniors during the annual Commencement ceremony at the University of Minnesota, Morris. The ceremony will begin at 2 p.m. May 17 on the Morris campus.*

(March 28, 2008)-U.S. Rep. Keith Ellison will address this year's graduating seniors during the annual Commencement ceremony at the University of Minnesota, Morris. The ceremony will begin at 2 p.m. May 17 on the Morris campus.

Ellison has represented the Fifth Congressional District of Minnesota in the U.S. House of Representatives since taking office on January 4, 2007. The Fifth District includes the city of Minneapolis and the surrounding suburbs. He is a member of the Minnesota Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party (DFL). He previously served two terms representing Legislative District 58B in the Minnesota State House of Representatives, from 2003 to 2007. While in the State Legislature, he served on the Public Safety, Policy and Finance Committee, and the Election and Civil Law Committee. Ellison led efforts to protect Minnesota children from dangerous pesticides and chemicals he promoted legislation to restore the voting rights of ex-offenders and he successfully advocated for an increase in the state's minimum wage.

Ellison made history as the first African American from Minnesota to serve in the U.S. Congress. He also made history by becoming the first person of the Muslim faith in America to serve in Congress. His philosophy is one of "generosity and inclusiveness." His roots as a community activist and his message of inclusivity through democratic participation resonates throughout the Fifth District. His priorities in Congress are to promote peace, prosperity for working families, environmental sustainability and to promote civil and human rights.

Ellison serves on the Financial Services and Judiciary Committees. The Financial Services Committee provides oversight for the nation's housing and financial services sector, while the Judiciary Committee oversees the country's legal system: issues like civil and human rights, immigration and election law.

Now 44 years old, Ellison was born and raised in Detroit, Mich. He moved to Minnesota in 1987 to attend the University of Minnesota Law School, where he earned his law degree in 1990. Keith and his wife, Kim Ellison, have lived on Minneapolis' north side for the past 18 years. Kim is a high school mathematics teacher. They are the proud parents of four children.

"We are indeed fortunate that someone of Congressman Ellison's stature has agreed to join us for our Commencement ceremony this year," said UMM Chancellor Jacquie Johnson.

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at [morris.umn.edu](http://morris.umn.edu) or call 888-866-3382.