



### **Eastern Awards Honorary Degree to Hollywood Casting Director**

Eastern Connecticut State University presented an honorary doctorate of humane letters to Susan McCray of Malibu, CA, at Eastern’s 118<sup>th</sup> Commencement on May 18, in recognition of her professional and philanthropic contributions.

“What a wonderful day!” McCray exclaimed in accepting her degree. “I am so honored to be here. Eastern is a university of dreams, dreams that have come true, and those that will come true.”

McCray’s career as a Hollywood casting director included work on such television shows as “Happy Days,” “Little House on the Prairie,” and “Highway to Heaven,” among others.



In 1999 she established the Susan McCray Endowment Fund for Theatre Arts at Eastern. In 2004, she donated her father’s sheet music collection — The Harry Sukman Master’s of Music Collection — to Eastern’s J. Eugene Smith Library. Sukman, an Academy Award-winning composer, created the theme songs for such television hits as “Bonanza” and “The High Chaparral.”

McCray and her husband, Kent, have been strong supporters of the Eastern Department of Performing Arts, frequently serving as guest lecturers, and bringing with them such friends as playwright Maggie Brown and actors Henry Darrow and Pamela Roylance.

In addition to her long-time support of Eastern, McCray’s philanthropic work also has benefited the University of Hartford; the Michael Landon Children’s Cancer Research Fund at the University of Arizona’s Medical Center; the Arizona Council on Aging; and the ALS (Lou Gehrig’s Disease) Association.