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Video: BC students, faculty commemorating 150th anniversary of Gettysburg Address

Posted by Matt Rocheleau November 19, 2013 12:12 PM

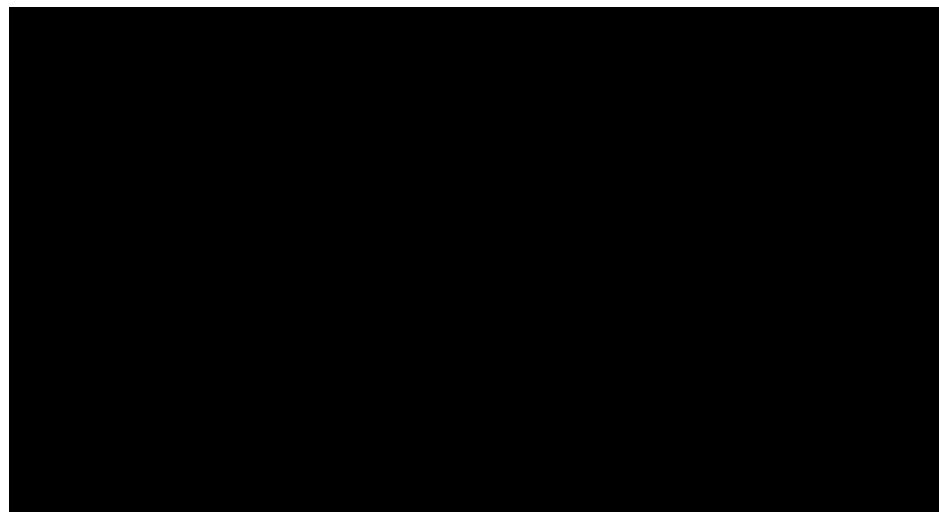
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(Boston College / YouTube)

By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

A group of Boston College students is holding a day-long commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Gettysburg Address.

From 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. in front of BC's century-old Gasson Hall, students and faculty will recite – some by memory – Abraham Lincoln's historic speech and offer personal reflections on its significance, the university said in a press release.

Recent MacArthur Fellowship recipient and chair of the BC History Department professor Robin Fleming will give an introduction. The day will also include Civil War-era pieces performed by campus musical groups and the playing of taps by the university's ROTC Color Guard.

BC seniors Anthony Bellitti, Meghan Daly and Kaitlyn McGillicuddy organized the event after being inspired by their history professor Jeremy Clarke, an Australian Jesuit priest and expert on Chinese history and culture, who encouraged them to pay tribute to their national heritage, officials said.

"The irony is that it took an Australian Jesuit who teaches Chinese history to convince

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us as American students to celebrate our history,” Bellitti said in a statement from the university. “This commemoration was our response to his challenge to explore the specifics of our nation’s past.”

The students organizing the event plan to film the recitations and contribute them to a project by Civil War documentarian Ken Burns called “[Learn the Address](#),” campus officials said.

Professor Clarke said he is proud to see his students not only commemorating history, but making it themselves.

“Increasingly, I have become a believer in students being the subject and not the object of their leaning,” Clarke said, according to the press release. “They learn best by doing. So I told them, “This is a history class, and you have significant things in American history to reflect upon. So get going.””

The Gettysburg Address is regarded as one of the greatest speeches in US history. Lincoln delivered it on November 19, 1863, at the dedication of the Soldiers National Cemetery in Gettysburg. The dedication honored soldiers who died in that Pennsylvania town in a battle believed to be the deadliest of the Civil War and a key turning point in the war.

For more information about the event at BC, [click here](#).

Matt Rocheleau can be reached at mjrochele@gmail.com. Looking for more coverage of area colleges and universities? Go to our [Your Campus pages](#).

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