

## Alumni speak at spring ceremonies



Kirkland



Sisson



Thomaskutty

**Rik Kirkland**, a 1973 summa cum laude graduate of Birmingham-Southern and former managing editor and current global editor of *FORTUNE* magazine, delivered BSC's 2005 Commencement address.

Kirkland, who oversaw and directed all editorial operations at the magazine, addressed the Class of 2005 during annual Commencement ceremonies May 28 in Boutwell Auditorium in downtown Birmingham.

In Kirkland's years as managing editor, *FORTUNE* was twice nominated as a National Magazine Award Finalist for general excellence. Since 1995, he has consistently been named to the upper tier of a list of America's Top 100 Business Journalists. Joining the magazine in 1978 as a reporter, he also has served as deputy managing editor of Time Inc.'s Business Information Group and has produced two primetime PBS/*FORTUNE* specials on the economy. He is a regular contributor on CNN's *Lou Dobbs Tonight*.

Kirkland also earned a master's degree in English from Duke University.

**Rev. Jerry Sisson**, a 1958 BSC graduate and lifetime member of the BSC Board of Trustees, delivered the annual Baccalaureate address that same day in Bill Battle Coliseum on campus.

A former chairman of the BSC Board of Trustees and its Executive Committee, Sisson is pastor emeritus at Canterbury United Methodist Church in Mountain Brook. He served as a clergy for 45 years in the North Alabama Conference of the United Methodist Church, serving churches in Gadsden, Glencoe, Arab, Fayette, Tuscaloosa, Scottsboro, Huntsville, and Birmingham. He was district superintendent for the Birmingham-West and Birmingham-East districts.

Sisson received his master of divinity degree from Emory's Candler School of Theology and an honorary doctor of divinity degree from Birmingham-Southern.

The speaker for Honors Day April 21 was **Christopher Thomaskutty**, a 1999 BSC graduate and CitiStat operations analyst for the city of Baltimore Mayor's Office, where he serves as one of four analysts on an award-winning governance team that reports to Mayor Martin J. O'Malley. CitiStat has produced more than \$100 million in financial benefits and received national attention from *The New York Times* and *Governing* magazine. Recently, CitiStat won the Innovations in American Government Award from Harvard University.

Prior to joining CitiStat, Thomaskutty received a master's degree in public policy and urban planning from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. While at Birmingham-Southern, he was named a Truman Scholar.



**Celebrating good writing**—The 25th Anniversary Writing Today Conference at Birmingham-Southern March 11-12 honored previous Grand Masters of the conference as well as the craft of writing. Pictured (top photo, from left) are Bill Carter, 2005 Writing Today committee chair; Andrei Codrescu, keynote speaker and NPR commentator; Steve Chiotakis, local WBHM radio host; and Dr. John Tatter, BSC professor of English and chair of the Division of Humanities. Shown (bottom photo, from left) after the luncheon honoring past Grand Masters are Ron Council, 2006 Writing Today committee chair; Horton Foote, 1998 Writing Today Grand Master and screenwriter; and Carter.