

# **Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi**

*The Island University*

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**High Resolution Photo: [Former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates](#)**

## **Former Defense Secretary Robert Gates to Open Distinguished Speaker Series at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi** **Former Texas A&M president will speak at Island University on Veterans Day**

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas – Dr. Robert M. Gates, whose distinguished career of public service includes serving as secretary of defense under two U.S. presidents, will be the inaugural speaker in the new Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Distinguished Speaker Series on Friday, Nov. 11, at 8 p.m. in the Performing Arts Center at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

Over the five decades spanning the Cold War to the ongoing war on global terrorism, Gates was an advisor to eight U.S. presidents, becoming the nation's secretary of defense in 2006 during the second term of President George W. Bush. When Barak Obama took office in January 2009, he asked Gates to join his administration, giving Gates the distinction of being the only secretary of defense to remain in that position under a new president. On Gates' last day in office, Obama awarded him the Presidential Medal of Freedom, America's highest civilian honor.

Before becoming secretary of defense, Gates was the president of Texas A&M University, the nation's seventh largest university. Prior to assuming the Texas A&M presidency, he served as interim dean of the George Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M from 1999 to 2001.

A native of Kansas, Gates received his bachelor's degree from the College of William and Mary, his master's degree in history from Indiana University and his doctorate in Russian and Soviet history from Georgetown University. He was recently named as the next chancellor of the College of William and Mary. His term begins in February 2012. He is the first William and Mary alumnus in the modern era to serve as chancellor of the College.

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Gates joined the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in 1966 and, after he was commissioned a second lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force, served as an intelligence officer at Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri. He worked as an intelligence professional for 27 years, including almost nine at the National Security Council where he served presidents of both political parties and was director of Central Intelligence from 1991 until 1993.

Gates is the only career officer in CIA's history to rise from entry-level employee to director. He served as deputy director of Central Intelligence from 1986 until 1989 and as assistant to the president and deputy national security adviser at the White House from Jan. 20, 1989, until Nov. 6, 1991, for President George H.W. Bush.

During his career, Gates has been awarded the National Security Medal, the Presidential Citizens Medal, has twice received the National Intelligence Distinguished Service Medal, and has three times received the CIA's highest award, the Distinguished Intelligence Medal. He is the author of the memoir, "From the Shadows: The Ultimate Insider's Story of Five Presidents and How They Won the Cold War," published in 1996.

Tickets for the Distinguished Speaker Series at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi will be available beginning Wednesday, Sept. 21. For more information, call 361.825.5507.

**-A&M-Corpus Christi-**