

People2day

University of Florida is free fallin' for Tom Petty

Tom Petty has been nominated for the University of Florida's Distinguished Achievement Award.

Petty, the 51-year-old lead singer of **Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers**, is a Gainesville native and 1968 graduate of Gainesville High School. He left the city in 1974 and now lives in Los Angeles.

The award is "given to individuals for exceptional achievements in a chosen profession, for demonstrated leadership, and for other exemplary accomplishments." The award is contingent upon its recipient making an appearance at the university's graduation ceremonies next spring. A spokesman for the singer said Petty, who did not attend the school, was looking at his schedule.



Tom Petty

State Sen. **Rod Smith** and the Children's Home Society of Mid-Florida nominated Petty for his Grammy-winning contributions to music, as well as for his humanitarian efforts for Live Aid, Farm Aid, Greenpeace and other charity events, including the recent all-star telethon to benefit victims of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.