

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**REQUEST TO AWARD AN HONORARY DOCTOR OF HUMANE LETTERS DEGREE
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA**

Action Requested: Consider approval of the request by the University of Iowa to award an honorary doctor of humane letters degree to Vivian Stringer at Spring 2010 Commencement.

Executive Summary: The University of Iowa wishes to recognize Ms. Stringer for her exceptional achievements in human rights, consistent with the values of higher education.

Details on Ms. Stringer's Accomplishments:

- ◇ A coal miner's daughter, Ms. Stringer learned a valuable lesson from her parents growing up in the small town of Edenborn, PA - "Work hard and don't look for excuses, and you can achieve anything."
- ◇ A graduate of Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania, Ms. Stringer is the only coach, male or female, to take teams at three different schools, including Cheyney State College (1982), the University of Iowa (1993), and Rutgers University (2000 and 2007), to the Final Four. She has the third highest number of wins as a coach in women's basketball history.
- ◇ Her honors and awards are numerous. In 2001, she was inducted into the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame. In July 2002, the C. Vivian Stringer Medallion Award of Sport for Women's Coaching was presented for the first time. In 2009, she was inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame, in the same class as Michael Jordan. She has been named National Coach of the Year three times.
- ◇ Her pioneering work has opened the way for other women and women of color to succeed on the national stage. Her accomplishments extend far beyond the basketball court. As she states in her autobiography, *Standing Tall: A Memoir of Tragedy and Triumph*, "I am the last stop before the young women I coach take their place in society, and it is a responsibility I take seriously."
- ◇ In 2007, Rutgers again reached the NCAA Tournament's Final Four after upsetting #1 seed Duke. After the 2007 tournament, Ms. Stringer served as spokesperson for the Rutgers team during a media firestorm over a derogatory reference made to the team on the now-cancelled CBS radio and television program, Imus in the Morning. Although advised by many to let the incident blow over, she recognized it as a moment that she could not ignore in good conscience. She insisted that the public recognize her players not only as the accomplished athletes they were but as the accomplished young women they had become. It was obvious from their comments that these young women had instilled deep within themselves the lessons of pride and dignity and justice that Ms. Stringer had been teaching them.

Ms. Stringer's success lies not just in her athletic achievements, but, more importantly, in her recognition of the true contribution of sports to education which is to foster character and achievement in an arena that will translate to character and achievement in life.