

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**REQUEST TO AWARD AN HONORARY DOCTOR OF HUMANE LETTERS DEGREE**

**Action Requested:** Consider approval of the request by Iowa State University to award an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree to Kenneth M. Quinn at Fall 2008 Commencement.

**Executive Summary:** Iowa State University wishes to recognize Ambassador Quinn for his exceptional public leadership and outstanding humanitarian service to Iowa, the nation, and the world during the past four decades.

**Details on Ambassador Quinn's Accomplishments:**

- ◇ Ambassador Quinn grew up in Dubuque and graduated from Loras College with a degree in political science. He received the M.A. in political science from Marquette University and the Ph.D. in government and politics from the University of Maryland.
- ◇ Ambassador Quinn's career with the U.S. Foreign Service spanned 32 years. He served as a rural development officer in Vietnam, a member of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's National Security Staff at the White House, Special Assistant to Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, a member of the U.S. Mission to the United Nations in Vienna, and a U.S. Ambassador to Cambodia.
- ◇ As Ambassador to Cambodia and Senior Diplomat in Southeast Asia, he played a key role in exposing the Khmer Rouge tragedy to the world and bringing it an end.
- ◇ From 1978 to 1982, in a special exchange program between the federal government and state government, Ambassador Quinn served as Special Assistant to Iowa Governor Robert Ray. He directed the Indochinese resettlement program and served as Executive Director of Iowa SHARES, which sent medical personnel, supplies, and food from Iowa to Cambodia to alleviate starvation.
- ◇ After his retirement from the U.S. Foreign Service in 2000, Ambassador Quinn became president of the World Food Prize Foundation, whose headquarters are in Des Moines. He led the development of the annual World Food Prize into what is recognized today as the "Nobel Prize for Food and Agriculture."
- ◇ Ambassador Quinn is one of the nation's most decorated U.S. Foreign Service Officers. He is the only person to receive the American Foreign Service Association Award three times. At his retirement, he received the Secretary of State's Award for Heroism and Valor for his efforts to protect American citizens exposed to danger in Vietnam and for his efforts in four life-saving rescues in Vietnam. His other awards include the Department of Defense Award for Distinguished Civilian Service, Treasury Department Award, and Presidential Distinguished Service Award.