

Contact: Rachel Boon

**REQUEST TO AWARD AN HONORARY DEGREE
AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY**

Action Requested: Consider approval of the request by Iowa State University to award an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree to Dr. Trudy Huskamp Peterson at the Spring 2023 commencement.

Details of Dr. Peterson's Accomplishments: Iowa State University wishes to present an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree to Dr. Trudy Huskamp Peterson, the first woman archivist of the United States. Iowa State would like to recognize Dr. Peterson, an Iowa native and 1967 Iowa State University alumna, for her many outstanding contributions to bring our nation's rich documentary heritage before as wide a public as possible and as an advocate for maintaining and preserving archives that involve the human rights of individuals around the world.

Dr. Peterson began working for the U.S. National Archives in 1974. She distinguished herself quickly, rising to team leader and then branch chief, first of the Legislative and Natural Resources Branch and then the Machine-Readable Records Branch. Within a decade, she was part of the senior leadership, first as Assistant Archivist and later, as Deputy Archivist and Acting Archivist, i.e., holding the top two leadership posts at the National Archives. Her first international assignment came as Commissioner for the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on Missing in Action/Prisoners of War.

As Acting Archivist, Dr. Peterson was responsible for 3,000 employees and a budget of nearly \$250 million. Her main accomplishments were the completion and opening of the new National Archives building at College Park, Maryland and the development of a nationwide computer network for the National Archives. She also advocated for the improvement of national standards for archival record descriptions.

In 1995, Dr. Peterson accepted a position as executive director of the Open Society Archives at Central European University in Budapest, Hungary, and retired from the National Archives. She spent the next few years in Hungary and the Czech Republic, working on record management and preservation following the collapse of the Soviet Union. In 1999, she assumed the role of archivist for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva, Switzerland.

In 2002, she founded her own archival consulting company, and she remains active in this work. Her clients include the United Nations, the Truth and Reconciliation Committees of South Africa and Honduras, the Nuclear Claims Tribunal of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, special courts and criminal tribunals in Sierra Leone and Rwanda and various Human Rights Commissions in Asia and Latin America, the World Bank and the World Health Organization, among many other international agencies. She has worked extensively on the preservations of human rights-related records. Her book on this topic, *Final Acts: A Guide to Preserving the Records of Truth Commissions* was published by Johns Hopkins University Press in 2005.

Faculty members in the Department of History at Iowa State University nominated Dr. Trudy Huskamp Peterson for the honorary degree. Her nomination is supported by Iowa State's Faculty Senate Honorary Degree Committee and Executive Board, Senior Vice President and Provost Jonathan Wickert, and President Wendy Wintersteen, who is pleased to present it to the Board of Regents, State of Iowa.