

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**REQUEST TO AWARD HONORARY DEGREES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA**

**PART I – REQUEST TO AWARD AN HONORARY DOCTOR OF HUMANE LETTERS TO THE DALAI LAMA**

**Action Requested:** Consider approval of the request by the University of Northern Iowa to award an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree to His Holiness the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, at Spring 2010 Commencement.

**Executive Summary:** The University of Northern Iowa wishes to recognize the Dalai Lama for his lifelong commitment to and embodiment of universal human values, such as compassion, forgiveness, tolerance, and love.

**Details on the Dalai Lama's Accomplishments:**

- ◇ The Dalai Lama is both the head of state and the spiritual leader of Tibet. He was born in 1935 to a farming family in northeastern Tibet. At the age of two, the child was recognized as the reincarnation of the 13<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama, Thubten Gyatso. The Dalai Lamas are believed to be manifestations of the Bodhisattva of Compassion and patron saint of Tibet. Bodhisattvas are enlightened beings who have postponed their own nirvana and chosen to take rebirth in order to serve humanity.
- ◇ In 1950, the Dalai Lama assumed full political power after China's invasion of Tibet in 1949. After being forced into exile in 1959, he has been living in Dharamsala, in northern India, the seat of the Tibetan political administration in exile. He has embodied the desire of the Tibetan people to be free through non-violent measures. His efforts earned him the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989.
- ◇ The Dalai Lama is committed to religious harmony and understanding among the world's major religious traditions as well as to the promotion of human values. He has spoken strongly for better understanding and respect among the different faiths of the world.
- ◇ The Dalai Lama has established educational, cultural, and religious institutions that have made major contributions toward the preservation of the Tibetan identity and its rich heritage.
- ◇ His Holiness has received more than 84 awards, honorary doctorates, and prizes in recognition of his message of peace, non-violence, inter-religious understanding, universal responsibility, kindness, and compassion. He has authored more than 72 books.
- ◇ The Dalai Lama will speak at the University of Northern Iowa on May 18, 2010. His speech, "The Power of Education," will focus on the importance of education in an increasingly global society, the role of education in developing socially responsible citizens, and the impact an individual can have on the world.

**PART II - REQUEST TO AWARD AN HONORARY DOCTOR OF LITERATURE DEGREE TO MILDRED KALISH**

**Action Requested:** Consider approval of the request by the University of Northern Iowa to award an honorary Doctor of Literature degree to Mildred Kalish at Spring 2010 Commencement.

**Executive Summary:** The University of Northern Iowa wishes to recognize Ms. Kalish for her embodiment of Midwestern values and lifelong commitment to education.

**Details on Ms. Kalish's Accomplishments:**

- ◇ Ms. Kalish was born on a farm near Garrison, Iowa in 1922. Her early years were influenced by the Great Depression, by the self-reliance and work ethic of her mother's parents, and by the remarkable challenges of living a rural life where children were expected to accept responsibilities beyond the ordinary.
- ◇ She earned her elementary teaching certificate from Iowa State Teachers College in Cedar Falls. After completing her degree, she moved to New York and accepted employment as a governess.
- ◇ In 1942, Ms. Kalish joined the U.S. Coast Guard Women's Reserve. She received radio training at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. After graduation, she served at the Headquarters of the 5<sup>th</sup> Naval District in Norfolk, Virginia where she met and married a fellow radio operator, Harry Kalish.
- ◇ Taking advantage of the G. I. Bill, Ms. Kalish continued her education at the University of Iowa. Eventually, she taught at the University of Iowa, University of Missouri at Columbia, and Adelphi University in Garden City, New Jersey. She is a Professor Emeritus of English from Suffolk County Community College on Long Island, New York.
- ◇ In 2007, Ms. Kalish published her memoir, *Little Heathens: Hard Times and High Spirits on an Iowa Farm during the Great Depression*. Prompted to write *Little Heathens* after her great-granddaughter expressed interest in learning more about Ms. Kalish's childhood days on the farm in Iowa, her book offers a glimpse into the lives of rural children during one of the most challenging times in America's history. She wrote of her upbringing and showed an appreciation for the challenges faced by her parents, recalling fond memories of living in town and on the farm during her childhood.
- ◇ Her book has received numerous awards, including being named best book by the *New York Times*, *Christian Science Monitor*, and *Cleveland Plain Dealer*. In 2007, she won the Iowa Reader Literary Award for Non-Fiction and, in 2008, she was Non-Fiction Winner of the Midwest Booksellers' Choice Award.

**PART III - REQUEST TO AWARD AN HONORARY DOCTOR OF HUMANE LETTERS DEGREE TO  
STEPHEN J. RAPP**

**Action Requested:** Consider approval of the request by the University of Northern Iowa to award an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree to Stephen J. Rapp at Winter 2010 Commencement.

**Executive Summary:** The University of Northern Iowa wishes to recognize Mr. Rapp for his lifelong commitment to justice as Chief Prosecutor at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

**Details on Mr. Rapp's Accomplishments:**

- ◇ Born in 1949, Mr. Rapp is a native of Cedar Falls and a former state legislator. From 1993 to 2001, he served as the U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Iowa where his office won historic convictions under the firearms provision of the Violence Against Women Act and the serious violent offender provision of the 1994 Crime Act.
- ◇ In 2005, he became the Chief of Prosecutions at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, where he assisted Chief Prosecutor Hassan Bubacar Jallow in investigating violations of international criminal law in Rwanda during 1994.
- ◇ In 2005, Mr. Rapp was quoted in the *Des Moines Register* as saying he would like to go to Cambodia to help prosecute the aging leaders of the Khmer Rouge. "If nothing else, I'll be involved in it. It is how I want to spend the rest of my life – trying to bring justice where it hasn't existed before."
- ◇ In 2006, Mr. Rapp became the third Chief Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. He led the prosecutions of former Liberian President Charles Taylor and other persons alleged to bear the greatest responsibility for the atrocities during the civil war in Sierra Leone. During his tenure, his office achieved the first convictions in history for sexual slavery and forced marriage as crimes against humanity, and for attacks on peacekeepers and recruitment and use of child soldiers as violations of international humanitarian law.
- ◇ Mr. Rapp is a non-partisan advocate of justice for the survivors of the Rwandan and Sierra Leone's genocides and he works to create laws and policies to prevent holocausts in the future.
- ◇ His appointment by President Barack Obama to lead the State Department's Office of War Crimes Issues was confirmed by the U.S. Senate in September 2009. This office helps formulate U.S. policy on responding to atrocities in areas of conflict around the globe. Senator Charles Grassley commented on Mr. Rapp's appointment, "Steve Rapp has the respect of people around the world, and has been a leader in prosecuting war crimes committed against civilian populations. He is an ideal person for the job."
- ◇ Mr. Rapp received his undergraduate degree in government and international relations with honors from Harvard University. He attended Columbia Law School and received his law degree with honors from Drake University.