

Contact: Rachel Boon

**REQUEST TO AWARD HONORARY DOCTORATES
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 Mr. Mark Johnson, and an honorary Doctor of Science and Medicine degree to Dr. Mark Mattson, to be conferred at the spring 2020 commencement ceremony.

Executive Summary: The University of Iowa wishes to recognize Mr. Mark Johnson and Dr. Mark Mattson for their significant influence in their respective fields of cinema and television, and on the science of healthy aging.

Details of Mr. Johnson's Accomplishments:

- Mr. Mark Johnson's influence on cinema and television has contributed to shaping modern American culture and society; and he has championed children in need as the founder of the Children's Action Network.
- Mr. Johnson, executive producer of more than 40 feature films and numerous television films and series, has won an Academy Award, three Emmy Awards, a Peabody Award, and a Golden Globe. He received an Oscar as the producer of director/writer Barry Levinson's Rain Man, starring Dustin Hoffman and Tom Cruise. He produced all of Barry Levinson's films from 1982 to 1994, including Good Morning, Vietnam; The Natural; Tin Men; Avalon; Diner; and Bugsy. Other film credits include The Chronicle of Narnia franchise, Not Fade Away, My Sister's Keeper, The Notebook, Ballast, Galaxy Quest, the Rookie, Donnie Brasco, A Perfect World, and Breath.
- In the television arena, Mr. Johnson has been an executive producer of the award-winning dramas Breaking Bad and Better Call Saul. He also produced AMC's Halt and Catch Fire, Hulu's Shut Eye, and the Sundance Channel's Rectify, which won the Peabody Award.
- Mr. Johnson is a member of the Board of Governors of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, and chair of the Academy's Foreign Language Selection Committee. He chairs the advisory board for the Virginia Film Festival, for which he has worked in some capacity during the majority of its 30-year run.
- He received an M.A. degree in Communication and Theatre Arts from the University of Iowa in 1973. Today, he has a reputation as a generous mentor who is committed to championing and investing in the next generation of professionals and students interested in pursuing careers in the film industry, many of whom are students or alumni of the University of Iowa.
- Also a champion of children in need, Mr. Johnson established a philanthropic nonprofit, the Children's Action Network, which is dedicated to finding stable homes for the more than 107,000 children in the U.S. who are waiting for adoptive families, and improving outcomes for the more than 500,000 children in foster care.
- Mr. Johnson became an Alumni Fellow in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences in 2007, and received the University of Iowa Alumni Association Distinguished Alumni Award in 2016.

Details of Dr. Mattson's Accomplishments:

- Dr. Mark Mattson has made outstanding contributions to basic and clinical science of healthy aging, which have fundamentally changed how we think about lifelong brain health.
- Dr. Mattson's distinguished scientific research career—which he started as a research assistant at the University of Iowa—has led him to be considered a pioneer in the fields of neuroscience and aging. His published works have been cited more than 150,000 times. He has edited 19 books and many special issues of journals, and presented a plethora of invited lectures. Virtually every modern book on dietary recommendations references Dr. Mattson's "caloric restriction" paradigm.
- Dr. Mattson has been a pioneer in working out molecular signaling systems in the brain that govern the alterations that occurred during the process of brain development. He has also clarified how environmental factors influence brain function. He has studied both the basic elements of these processes as well as their involvement in the pathogenesis of major brain disorders such as Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease.
- One of his most important contributions revealed how intermittent fasting and exercise can counteract adverse effects of diabetes and obesity on the brain, and enhance cognitive performance. Dr. Mattson has translated his findings obtained in animal models to clinical trials in human subjects, with one result being that many people are today incorporating intermittent fasting diets into their lifestyles.
- He has been an important contributor to the Diversity in Aging Research Pipeline Program (DARPP), a pilot program that seeks to increase diversity within the biological sciences, providing research and development opportunities to underrepresented minority students. For his work on this initiative, Dr. Mattson earned the NIH Award of Merit—just one of the many accolades he has garnered throughout his prestigious career.
- In addition to his extensive contribution to the scientific field, Dr. Mattson has also had a major impact through his training of investigators who have gone on to develop their own distinguished careers.
- Dr. Mattson's stellar research career and his insights into practical, life-enhancing applications set a clear and lasting example for all future students for how a lifetime of scientific achievement can be paired with profound public impact.