

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE

Committee on Honorary Degrees
(Final; Action)

HD.19.03 Nominations for Honorary Degrees

The Senate Committee on Honorary Degrees is pleased to nominate the following individuals for an honorary degree to be conferred at the May 2019 Commencement exercises:

- Alan Alda
- Carla D. Hayden

Information relative to the background and achievements of these nominees is attached. Based on the criteria approved by the Senate, the Committee has selected these individuals for Senate consideration.

The Committee wishes to express its sincere appreciation to all who participated in the process, particularly those who spent considerable amounts of time and effort in preparing documentation for these nominees.

COMMITTEE ON HONORARY DEGREES
Matthew Wheeler, Chair
Elvira Demejia
Larry Fahnestock
Ane Icardo Isasa
Thomas Nevins
Rolando Romero
Antonio Sanchez

Alan Alda
Visiting Professor, Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science,
Stony Brook University

EDUCATION:

B.A., English, Fordham University, 1956

*Nominated by: Gene E. Robinson, Director, Carl R. Woese Institute for Genomic Biology, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Jeffrey S. Moore, Director, Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*

BASIS FOR NOMINATION:

We are nominating Alan Alda for an honorary degree in recognition of his dedication to increasing public understanding of science and his advancement of the field of science communication. His commitment to sharing the beauty and the power of scientific knowledge with the public parallels the outreach goals of the University of Illinois as a land-grant institution, and of the Carl R. Woese Institute for Genomic Biology (IGB) and the Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology.

EXCERPT FROM THE NOMINATION LETTER:

“Motivated by his own curiosity about the scientific world and his desire to share the excitement of scientific exploration with others, in 1993 Alda became the host of *Scientific American Frontiers*, a PBS show that highlighted scientific advances through interviews with researchers. During Alda’s 13-year tenure as host, the show was recognized by the Council of Media Integrity for “outstanding contributions to the public’s understanding of science and scientific principles.” His work helped to bring engaging, accurate scientific content to a generation of viewers, a few of whom eventually appeared as guests on the show after pursuing their own careers in STEM.

In 2013, Alda founded the Stony Brook Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science to continue this work on a larger scale. The center provides resources and training to help scientists improve their communication skills, as well as conducting research to identify more effective approaches to public science education. In 2016, in recognition of the work that led to the center’s establishment, Alda was awarded the National Academy of Sciences Public Welfare Medal. The Academy honored his “extraordinary application of the skills honed as an actor to communicating science on television and stage, and by teaching scientists innovative techniques that allow them to tell their stories to the public.””

HONORS/AWARDS (NOT INCLUSIVE):

- 1974 Emmy, Actor of the Year
- 1974 Emmy, Best Lead Actor in a Comedy Series
- 1975 Golden Globe, Best TV Actor – Musical/Comedy
- 1976 Golden Globe, Best TV Actor – Musical/Comedy
- 1977 Emmy, Outstanding Directing in a Comedy Series
- 1979 Emmy, Outstanding Writing in a Comedy Series
- 1980 Golden Globe, Best TV Actor – Musical/Comedy
- 1981 Golden Globe, Best Performance by an Actor in a TV Series – Comedy/Musical
- 1982 Emmy, Outstanding Lead Actor in a Comedy Series
- 1983 Golden Globe, Best Performance by an Actor in a TV Series – Comedy/Musical
- 1994 Induction into the Television Hall of Fame

- 1998 The Sagan Award, Council of Scientific Society Presidents
- 2006 Fellow, American Academy of Arts and Sciences
- 2006 Public Service Award, National Science Board
- 2006 Emmy, Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Drama Series
- 2010 AAAS Kavli Science Journalism Award for PBS series, The Human Spark
- 2012 International Emmy Special Founder's Award
- 2013 Scientific American Lifetime Achievement Award
- 2013 American Chemical Society Award for Public Service
- 2014 American Chemical Society James T. Grady-James H. Stack Award for Interpreting Chemistry for the Public
- 2015 Fellow, American Physical Society
- 2016 Public Welfare Medal, National Academy of Sciences
- 2016 Harvard Mahoney Neuroscience Institute's David Mahoney Prize for increasing public awareness of brain science

EXCERPTS FROM THE LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION:

Marc Tessier-Lavigne, President, Stanford University

"Mr. Alda has also been passionate about the need to help scientists communicate better. In 2009, The Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science was established in his honor at SUNY Stony Brook's School of Journalism. Through the Center he pioneered an innovative course using improvisational theater techniques to help scientists connect with their many audiences. He recognized that scientists could use these techniques to strengthen their interpersonal skills, and, as a result, become better at sharing their scientific work with a diverse group of people. Today, scientists must be comfortable engaging with fundraisers, members of Congress, journalists and general laypeople to secure support required to advance their work. The results of these interactions are often dependent on a scientist's ability to convey their discoveries in a compelling way. Today, more scientists are better prepared for these exchanges because of his work at Stony Brook and other academic institutions."

Eric R. Kandel, MD, University Professor, Department of Neuroscience, Columbia University

"I have known Alan for more than 10 years, and during that time I have found him to be one of the most generous, engaging, humorous and delightful people I know. Most of all, he is completely unassuming. You would never know in speaking with him even at length, that this congenial, funny, unpretentious, human being is a renowned actor, director, and writer who has done – two autobiographical books, both National Bestsellers – 48 movies, for which he has received numerous awards – and about 20 television series, the most famous of which, of course is M*A*S*H, one of the most popular comedies in the history of television.

In addition to writing, directing, and acting, Alan has had a longstanding interest in science. He hosted PBS's Scientific American Frontier from 1993 to 2005, and enjoyed it so much that he called it the best thing he's ever done in front of a camera. Considering his career in television, in the movies, and in the theatre, that is quite a statement. He also co-chaired the 2009 World Science Festival in New York, and he co-hosted the 2010 documentary mini-series *The Human Spark*."

Phillip A. Sharp, Institute Professor, Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research at MIT

"I know Mr. Alda through his participation in an annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. ... We invited Mr. Alda to present a Keynote address on the subject of communication of science to the public. ... The topic is very important, as public support of science remains critical for our society and most scientists, including myself, are not skilled in speaking to the general public. Mr. Alda has established a training program on this subject at University of New York at Stony Brook and, I think, has teams traveling across the country training both senior scientists and students in these skills. "

Carla D. Hayden

Librarian of Congress

EDUCATION:

B.A., Political Science and African History, Roosevelt University, 1973
M.A., Library Science, University of Chicago, 1977
Ph.D., Library Science, University of Chicago, 1987

*Nominated by: John P. Wilkin, Juanita J. and Robert E. Simpson Dean of Libraries and University Librarian, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Antoinette Burton, Presidential Fellow, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*

BASIS FOR NOMINATION:

Dr. Hayden's career represents the highest levels of supporting freedom of speech, access to information, and a genuine concern for all citizens. In addition to the numerous awards she has received and her accomplishments, Dr. Hayden has ties to Illinois. Her degrees are from Illinois institutions and her aunt, Doris Ruth Hendricks, worked for many years in dining services and eventually residence hall customer services at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Carla's father was from Tuscola and was director of music at Malcolm X University in Chicago. Carla Hayden's career is one of distinction, particularly in the area of public service.

EXCERPT FROM THE NOMINATION LETTER:

"Dr. Hayden is the first woman and first African American to be appointed to the post of Librarian of Congress. She became the 14th Librarian of Congress in 2016. She is passionately dedicated to equity of access to information as illustrated by her outstanding career in libraries. Dr. Hayden previously served as director of the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore for 23 years where she transformed a deteriorating library system into a vital community service agency. During the 2015 riots in Baltimore following the death of Freddie Gray who was severely injured while in police custody, Dr. Hayden kept the libraries open citywide to continue service and provide people with safe spaces while most stores in the community shut down.

Dr. Hayden began her career with the Chicago Public Library as a library associate and children's librarian from 1973 to 1979 and as the young adult services coordinator from 1979 to 1982. She was library services coordinator for the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago from 1982 to 1987. She served from 1991 to 1993 as deputy commissioner and chief librarian of the Chicago Public Library. She was elected president of the American Library Association (ALA) for 2003 to 2004 and successfully challenged the government's attempt under the USA Patriot Act to gain unwarranted access to library records. She led development of the ALA Spectrum Scholarship program which actively recruits and provides scholarships to students from diverse backgrounds to assist them in obtaining a graduate degree and leadership positions."

HONORS/AWARDS (NOT INCLUSIVE):

1995 Librarian of the Year Award, *Library Journal*
1995 Andrew White Medal, Loyola University Maryland
1996 Legacy of Literacy Award, DuBois Circle of Baltimore
1998 President's Medal, Johns Hopkins University
2003 Woman of the Year, *Ms. Magazine*
2003 Maryland's Top 100 Women, *The Daily Record*
2006 Jean E. Coleman Library Outreach Lecture, American Library Association

- 2013 Joseph W. Lippincott Award, American Library Association
- 2015 Jean E. Coleman Library Outreach Lecture, American Library Association
- 2016 The World's 50 Greatest Leaders, *Fortune*
- 2018 Newberry Library Award for service to the humanities

EXCERPTS FROM THE LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION:

Courtney L. Young, 2014-2015 American Library Association President, University Librarian and Professor in the Libraries, Colgate University

"Her current groundbreaking role is as the fourteenth Librarian of Congress. The first woman and first African American to be nominated and confirmed to lead the Library, her appointment was also only the third time that a credentialed librarian held the position dating back to 1802. In her swearing in remarks, Dr. Hayden noted her goal of making the library "a place where you can touch history and imagine your future". In a short period of time she has worked tirelessly to increasing awareness of the library as the nation's library including improvements to the Young Readers Center and plans to make the collections more accessible through the use of technology. ... In 2017, she was awarded the prestigious Melvil Dewey Medal, given in recognition of the recipient's "creative leadership of high order, particularly in those fields in which Melvil Dewey was actively interested: library management, library training, cataloging and classification, and the tools and techniques of librarianship."

Winston Tabb, Dean of the University Libraries and Museums, Johns Hopkins University

"I was privileged to serve with Carla on the board of the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS). To our mutual surprise and pleasure, our appointments by President Obama were announced on the same day. During our service on the IMLS Board, I was again impressed by Carla's excellent judgment, and knowledge about and interest in a broad range of library types, library activities and challenges – but also her deep interest in the role of museums as well. Her pioneering engagement in the creation of the Digital Public Library of American (DPLA) ensured that public library assets and needs were considered in what might otherwise have become a more narrowly focused research library initiative. These experiences are serving all Americans well as she fulfills her role as Librarian of Congress, arguably the most important and influential library position in the world."

Camila A. Alire, Ed.D, ALA President 2009-10, Dean Emerita, University of New Mexico and Colorado State University

"In the field of library and information science, Carla has not only contributed to our discipline throughout her entire career but she has also done that with such distinction.

When holding the office of president of the American Library Association (ALA), Carla led the effort against the government's proposed Patriot Act which would deny library users the protection of their privacy by accessing their user records. For this, she was recognized by *Ms. Magazine* as its 2003 Woman of the Year.

Additionally, our profession recognized her with its highest honor, the ALA Joseph W. Lippincott Award for distinguished service to our profession for her outstanding contribution to all that ALA embodies. Outside our profession, Carla was added to *Fortune Magazine's* list of the World's 50 Greatest Leaders recognizing for her outstanding leadership in our profession."

James G. Neal, University Librarian Emeritus, Columbia University; President, American Library Association (2017-18)

"In an age when research is under attack, when knowledge literacy is so important to understanding what is true and what is false, and when equity of access to information is so threatened, it is critically important to have an individual with Carla Hayden's stature, record of accomplishment and leadership, and strong support in the professional and political arenas heading the Library of Congress."