RECOMMENDATION FOR HONORARY DEGREE, SIUE

Summary

The President, on the recommendation of the SIUE Chancellor, requests Board of Trustees approval to award an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree to Mr. Ralph F. Korte at the May 2010 SIUE commencement.

Rationale for Adoption

Ralph F. Korte served as Chairman of the Board of the Korte Company, an eco-conscious construction company, until his retirement in November 2008. He launched the company in 1958 and subsequently enrolled at SIUE. A strong supporter of the value of higher education, Korte pursued his education as a non-traditional student on nights and weekends through the SIUE School of Business, graduating with a bachelor of science in 1968. The Korte Company has grown into a nationally recognized industry leader with more than 1,600 projects completed across the nation, including office buildings, schools, munitions plants, stadiums and more. It is a company with a pioneering background as one of the first to use Design-Build, twenty years before it was recognized by the rest of the industry as the most cost-effective method of project delivery. The Korte Company was also one of the first to use other new building methods, specifically Tilt-Up and Design-Build-Furnish, as well as implementing the use of the computer to improve and simplify the building process.

Mr. Korte has also been involved in the creation and implementation of a number of new initiatives on the SIUE campus. Guided by his passion for learning and helping others, Korte was instrumental in promoting the idea for the Department of Construction Management within the SIUE School of Engineering. He believes business skills, combined with strong construction and design knowledge, are essential to creating leaders in the construction industry. The Construction Management Program was developed in the fall of 1979. Subsequent projects included the construction of the Ralph Korte Stadium in 1993; the donation of the Ralph and Donna Korte Classroom in the School of Business; the creation of the Ralph & Donna Korte Fund for Leadership and Innovation in Business Education in 1999; and the launch of the SIUE Construction Leadership Institute in 2004. In November 2008, the Korte Company established the Ralph Korte Endowment Scholarship for students entering into the Construction Management Program at SIUE. Individually and through corporate giving, Ralph Korte has donated nearly $2 million over the course of 34 years. Currently, he remains active in The Gardens at
SIUE as a Founding Friend and has contributed both monetarily and as a volunteer assisting in the development of The Gardens project.

Throughout his career, Korte has held leadership positions on a variety of boards, including president of the Southern Illinois Builders Association, chairman of the SIUE Foundation Board, chairman of the SIUE School of Business Advisory Board and chairman of the National Associated General Contractors (AGC) Education Committee.

Additionally, Mr. Korte’s professional activities have included the Illinois Business Roundtable, Emeritus Trustee of the Missouri Botanical Garden, Southern Illinois Builders Association, St. Louis AGC, Leadership Council and St. Louis RCGA. He has received numerous awards including the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award, Salute to Southwestern Illinois Award and the SIUE Distinguished Alumni Award (1978). Korte is a lifetime member of the SIUE Alumni Association and serves on the SIUE Foundation Board. He is a member of the inaugural class of the SIUE Alumni Hall of Fame.

The information provided above was derived from:
http://www.siue.edu/alumni/aboutalumni/profile-korte.shtml
http://www.siue.edu/ENGINEER/CONSTRUCT/news.html
and
http://www.korteco.com/Capabilities.aspx#.

Considerations Against Adoption

University officers are aware of none.

Constituency Involvement

SIUE’s Committee for Honorary Degrees and Distinguished Service Awards and the Chancellor of Southern Illinois University Edwardsville recommend this award.

Resolution

BE IT RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of Southern Illinois University in regular meeting assembled, That the honorary degree, Doctor of Humane Letters, be awarded to Mr. Ralph F. Korte at the May 8, 2010, commencement, or some commencement thereafter, of Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.