



Memorandum

19 May 2023

To: Ohio State University Senate

From: Senate Committee on Honorary Degrees  
Jim Cogdell, Chair, 2022-2023

Subject: Year-End Report on Committee Activities

This memorandum summarizes the activities of the Senate Committee on Honorary Degrees for the 2022-2023 academic year.

This past year the committee was composed of the following members: James Cogdell (2024, Chair); Pelagia Gouma (2026); Joseph Heremans (2026); Bruce McPheron (2027); Koritha Mitchell (2026); and Caroline Wagner (2023). Caroline Wagner completed her service this year.

We tried to meet in person this term, but finding a meeting time was impossible. Thus we opted to meet online. Votes were taken in Committee, although all decisions were unanimous.

The Committee had no rollover nominations from the previous year. We had two nominations for which we got the full package of nomination materials:

- Keith B Key, nominated for an Honorary Degree in Public Service by Michael C. Eicher. This nomination was sent to the Senate on November 22, 2022.
- General (Retired) John M. "Mike" Murray, nominated for an Honorary Degree in Public Service by Michael R. Kelvington. This nomination was sent to the Senate on March 20, 2023.

We also have the following candidates who are in the process of getting full nomination packets. We will take these up in the Autumn term.



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- Dolly Parton & Fran DeWine, nominated for an Honorary Degree by Joseph Laborie. (Caroline Wagner is handling this nomination since Mr. Laborie is a student from the Glenn College.)
- Douglas Brinkley, nominated for an Honorary Degree by Thomas A. Bartholomew, Class of 2006.
- Elizabeth Ruth Lwanga King, nominated for an Honorary Degree by Rosette Serwanga.
- LeBron James, nominated for an Honorary Degree by Ben Givens.

We had the following nomination that came from and we forwarded to the President's office:

- Janice Ponds, nominated for an Honorary Degree by herself. This was forwarded to the Presidents office because it seemed like Ms. Ponds was asking for an Honorary Degree as more of a social redress that on merit.

We had the following nominations that we turned down:

- Helen Swank, nominated for an Honorary Degree by Michael Ibrahim, Director of the School of Music. A letter was sent to Prof. Ibrahim explaining the situation. (The reasons for declining this nomination can be found in the Teams folder.)

During the year, the Committee Chair also interacted with the Office of the President to advise on commencement speaker nominations.

My plan is to continue being Chair for next year.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair, 2022-2023



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