

Board Meeting  
January 31, 2019

AWARD HONORARY DEGREE, SPRINGFIELD

**Action:** Award Honorary Doctorate Degree

**Funding:** No New Funding Required

The University of Illinois at Springfield Senate has recommended that an honorary degree be conferred on the following person at Commencement Exercises on May 11, 2019. The Chancellor, University of Illinois at Springfield, and Vice President, University of Illinois recommends approval of this nomination.

**Karen Hasara** -- the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters

Karen Hasara received her M.A. in Legal Studies in 1993 at the University of Illinois at Springfield. She also holds a B.S. in Psychology in 1972 from Sangamon State University. Ms. Hasara assisted in facilitating Sangamon State University's membership into the University of Illinois System. She has an outstanding record in politics, public affairs, and community service.

Ms. Hasara began her career as an elementary school teacher. In 1975, she was elected to the Sangamon County Board as the only woman among 29 members. A steady rise in central Illinois politics followed: member of the Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission from 1978 to 1981; Seventh Judicial Circuit Clerk, Sangamon County from 1980 to 1986; Illinois House of Representative from 1986 to 1993 serving the 100<sup>th</sup> District; Illinois Senate from 1993 to 1995 representing the 50<sup>th</sup> District; and finally, Mayor of Springfield from 1995 to 2003.

Her achievements during her career in politics include serving as Minority Spokesperson on the Mental Health Committee, Vice-Spokesperson on the State Government Administration Committee, and Chairperson of the Guardianship and Advocacy Commission. In the Illinois Senate, she was Vice-Chair of the Higher

Education, Local Government and Elections, and Transportation Committees. As Mayor of Springfield, she focused first on revitalizing the downtown area and received the President's Award from the American Institute of Architects in 2002. She advocated for the Mid-Illinois Medical District in Springfield, worked with the city council to pass "Scenic Springfield" laws and took steps to having more diverse police and fire departments. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum opened during her tenure as Mayor where she assisted in keeping the city's commitment to this monumental development on track.

She has served on the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce, World Affairs Council in Springfield, Board of the Central Illinois Community Palliative Care Initiative, U.S. Center for Citizen Diplomacy, Illinois Humanities Council, secretary of the Illinois Equal Justice Foundation, Vice President of the Illinois Municipal League, and a member of Women in Management. In 2009, Ms. Hasara was appointed to the University of Illinois Board of Trustees and served in that position until 2017. In 2012, she was appointed by the Illinois Supreme Court to serve as a Commissioner of the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission, a position she will hold until 2020.

Ms. Hasara has been an energetic and enthusiastic advocate for the university. She served for nine years on the NPR Illinois (formerly WUIS) Community Advisory Committee, many years on the UIS Development Advisory Board, UIS Leadership Roundtable (2001, 2002, and 2006), UIS Chancellor's Community Advisory Committee and the U of I Alumni SAGE Society Coordinating Committee. In 1996, she received the UIS Alumni Achievement Award and in 2007, the Distinguished Service Award.

The Board action recommended in this item complies in all material respects with applicable State and federal laws, University of Illinois *Statutes*, *The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, and Board of Trustees policies and directives.

The Executive Vice President and Vice President for Academic Affairs concurs with this recommendation.

The President of the University recommends approval.