

Approved by the Board of Trustees
March 11, 2021

Board Meeting
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RESOLUTION FOR THOMAS P. HARDY

The Board of Trustees would like to honor you and express its deepest appreciation for your important contributions to the University of Illinois System as you retire after nearly two decades as Executive Director of the Office of University Relations.

Your duties were varied and far-reaching but most visible in your public-facing role as chief spokesman. Under six presidents and seven board chairs, you were an informed, thoughtful and trusted voice for the U of I System. Day or night, in times of celebration or challenge, you fielded inquiries from media around the world, and always worked to keep lifting our richly deserved standing as a world leader in education and innovation. Nearly as often, inquiries came from colleagues within the system, seeking to draw on your unique talents and extensive institutional knowledge to shape their messaging.

But your work in the public eye was only a small part of your vital role as head of communications for the system. You also oversaw all system and presidential communications, from news releases to speeches, and guided strategy to help tell our story, working in concert with public affairs teams at our universities and university-related organizations.

Under your leadership, the U of I System also established and built its social media presence and launched nationwide marketing efforts that are expanding awareness of our achievements, our excellence, and our value to both students and the public good.

You also directed a less visible but equally important operation that processes more than 1,000 requests every year under the Freedom of Information Act, ensuring transparency with the public whose tax dollars support us and compliance with state law.

The many skills you brought to the U of I System were honed during a long, distinguished career in journalism, government and public affairs. For nearly 20 years, you were a reporter for the Chicago Tribune, where your work took you to the national stage, including coverage of presidential campaigns. Later, you moved on to serve the people of our state as press secretary under former Governor Jim Edgar, who became a colleague again when he joined our Institute of Government and Public Affairs.

Your 18 years with the U of I System has been characterized by unwavering dedication, remarkable diplomacy, a steady hand and deep-seated passion for our missions and our image. You have been a trusted advisor and a valued colleague, and your impact will endure through the countless coworkers you helped guide and mentor.

Your warmth, good humor, steadfast calm, and friendly demeanor are also deeply appreciated and will be forever remembered by the Board of Trustees and your friends across the U of I System.

The President, the University officers, faculty members, students, and staff join with the Board of Trustees in this statement of gratitude to you and extend best

wishes to you and your partner, Sue Schoij, and your family on the occasion of your retirement from the University of Illinois System.

The Board of Trustees directs that this resolution be incorporated in the minutes of today's meeting to become a part of the official public record, and that a suitable copy be given you as a permanent reminder of the esteem and affection in which you are held.