

BOARD OF REGENTS
BRIEFING PAPER

1. Agenda Item Title: UNR Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters to

Dr. Janice Davidson and Mr. Robert Davidson

2. BACKGROUND & POLICY CONTEXT OF ISSUE:

The University of Nevada, Reno is pleased to nominate educators, entrepreneurs, and philanthropists Janice G. and Robert M. Davidson for Honorary Doctorates of Letters in proud recognition of their significant contributions to the University and the state of Nevada.

Dr. Janice Davidson earned her undergraduate degree at Purdue University, and her master's in communications and her doctorate in American Studies from the University of Maryland. Working as a teacher in Los Angeles in the late 1970s, she became interested in the newly emerging field of educational applications for computers. In 1982, Dr. Davidson founded the educational software publishing firm, Davidson & Associates, Inc., and as president provided leadership and vision for hundreds of successful products.

Mr. Robert Davidson received his bachelor's of science in chemical engineering from Purdue University and his master's in business administration from UCLA. He also attended George Washington University where he earned his juris doctorate degree.

Mr. Davidson served as executive vice president of engineering and construction at Parsons Corporation before becoming chairman and CEO of Davidson & Associates. In 1993, Davidson & Associates went public and grew into a multi-hundred-million dollar corporation, recognized by *Business Week*, *Fortune*, and *Forbes* as one of the best small growth companies in the world. In 1996, the company was purchased by a New York Stock Exchange company.

After selling their company, the Davidsons began focusing on philanthropic endeavors in their lifelong passion for helping young people become successful learners. They came to realize that our nation's brightest students are one of the most underserved and neglected student populations in America's educational system. In 1999, the couple founded the Davidson Institute for Talent Development, a Reno-based national nonprofit foundation whose mission is to recognize, nurture, and support profoundly intelligent young people, and to provide opportunities for them to develop their talents. The Davidson Institute's THINK Summer Institutes have been held on the University of Nevada, Reno campus since 2004.

In 2004, the Davidsons wrote their award-winning book, *Genius Denied: How to Stop Wasting Our Brightest Young Minds*. In 2005, they worked to pass Nevada legislation to open a new kind of public school for profoundly gifted middle and high school students on the University of Nevada, Reno campus, The Davidson Academy of Nevada. The Davidsons renovated the main floor of the former Jot Travis Student Union building into a new home for the Davidson Academy.

In 2007, the Davidsons made the lead gift for the construction of the Davidson Mathematics and Science Center currently under construction on the University of Nevada, Reno campus and is scheduled to open this year, 2010.

Thanks to their enduring commitment to education and their dedication to the Davidson Academy and the Davidson Mathematics and Science Center, the University of Nevada, Reno will continue

to build on its tradition of excellence in serving Nevada's population with academic instruction and facilities second to none. The Davidsons' partnership with the University is creating new gateways to the world for students, allowing them to exceed their goals, outreach their potential, and succeed in a way that one day, they too can leave their footprint on the University of Nevada, Reno and the world around them. Whether in support of profoundly gifted young students or cutting edge math and science facilities, the Davidsons' commitment, leadership, and philanthropy has left an indelible impression on Nevada and the future of the University of Nevada, Reno.

3. SPECIFIC ACTIONS BEING RECOMMENDED OR REQUESTED:

Award an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters to Dr. Janice Davidson and to Mr. Robert Davidson from the University of Nevada, Reno.

4. IMPETUS (WHY NOW?):

5. BULLET POINTS TO SUPPORT REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:

6. POTENTIAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:

7. ALTERNATIVE(S) TO WHAT IS BEING REQUESTED/RECOMMENDED:

8. COMPLIANCE WITH BOARD POLICY:

- Consistent With Current Board Policy: Title #____ Chapter #____ Section #____
- Amends Current Board Policy: Title #____ Chapter #____ Section #____
- Amends Current Procedures & Guidelines Manual: Chapter #____ Section #____
- Other:_____
- Fiscal Impact: Yes____ No____
Explain:_____



Honorary Degree

Nomination Form

1. Degree to be Awarded:

X Honorary Doctorate ___ Honorary Baccalaureate ___ Honorary Associate

2. Please state the name and address of your nominee for an Honorary Degree.

Dr. Janice Davidson and Mr. Robert Davidson

P O Box 6761

Incline Village, NV 89450-6761

3. Honorary degrees shall be awarded to persons who have made significant contributions to the improvement of the quality of academic programs and academic life at one of the NSHE's institutions. Persons currently holding public elected office are not eligible for the degree except in extraordinary circumstances.

What are your reasons for nominating this person? (Attach additional pages, if necessary.)

Please see attachment "Janice and Robert Davidson Bio"

Dr. Milton D. Glick 1/26/10
President Date

University of Nevada, Reno
Institution

(B/R 3/03; Added 6/05)

UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, RENO
Honorary Degree Nomination – Janice G. and Robert M. Davidson

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