

The Lincoln Academy of Illinois

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Six to receive state's highest award, The Order of Lincoln

2011 Lincoln Academy Laureates announced

SPRINGFIELD – As the Land of Lincoln prepares to celebrate the 202nd birthday of Abraham Lincoln, Governor Pat Quinn today announced six distinguished Illinoisans who will receive The Order of Lincoln, the state's highest award.

“The men and women receiving the Order of Lincoln have dedicated themselves to improving their communities and helping their neighbors,” said Governor Quinn. “They truly reflect the selflessness embodied by our nation's sixteenth president, and we thank them for their service.”

The Order of Lincoln Medallion will be presented by Lincoln Academy of Illinois officials at a special ceremony Saturday, April 16 at the Krannert Center for Performing Arts at the University of Illinois at Urbana. The 2011 Laureates include:

Richard & Mary Lackritz Gray

Richard and Mary Lackritz Gray are lifelong Chicagoans with international reputations in the arts. The Richard Gray Gallery, founded in Chicago in 1963, is one of the leading dealers in modern and contemporary American and European art. Richard Gray is a Life Trustee of the Art Institute of Chicago, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Goodman Theater, and WTTW/WFMT. Also, he is Chairman Emeritus of the Board of Governors of the Smart Museum of Art and the Founding Vice-Chairman of the Chicago Humanities Festival. Mary Lackritz Gray, an art historian, is a member of the Friends of the Parks Advisory Board and the Art Institute's Committee on Libraries. She authored *A Guide to Chicago's Public Sculpture* in 1983 and *A Guide to Chicago's Murals* in 2001. The Grays have exhibited for decades a remarkable devotion to Illinois' cultural life through commitments of time, gifts of art, and donations.

Shahid Khan

Shahid Khan is the president of Flex-N-Gate Corporation, a global automobile components and systems manufacturer located in Urbana, Illinois. Through his understanding of design and entrepreneurial spirit, Khan has advanced new applications of technologies. A native of Pakistan, Khan began working at Flex-N-Gate shortly after he came to the United States to study industrial engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. After rising to the position of chief engineer in 1978, Khan left Flex-N-Gate to start his own firm, Bumper Works. He acquired Flex-N-Gate in 1980 and shaped the company over the course of 30 years into one of the top 200 largest private companies in the United States. Today, Flex-N-Gate employs over 9,500 people at 48 manufacturing and 9 product development and engineering facilities throughout Canada, the United States, Mexico, Argentina, and Spain. Khan has made significant investments in educational opportunities for future generations by supporting research, teaching, and outreach activities.

Shirley R. Madigan

As the voice for artists and the arts in Illinois, Shirley Madigan has given a lifetime of commitment to supporting and promoting arts organizations nationally and internationally. She was appointed to the Illinois Arts Council (IAC) in 1976, and has been asked to serve as IAC Chairman by five governors. Madigan actively represents the Council to arts organizations, individual artists, government officials, educators and the business and philanthropic communities. In addition, Madigan has served on the National Endowment for the Arts - Advisory Board on Arts Education, the boards of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, Arts Midwest and the Illinois Ethnic Heritage Commission. She has worked on the steering committees for Gallery 37, Year of the American Craft, and the Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission. She is currently a trustee of Loyola University of Chicago, Erikson Institute, and After School Matters.

Dawn Clark Netsch

Dawn Clark Netsch, Professor of Law Emerita at the Northwestern University School of Law, has been a pioneer in education, law and politics for more than 60 years. Born in Cincinnati, Ohio, Netsch earned her B.A., Phi Beta Kappa, from Northwestern University in 1948. She graduated first in her class from Northwestern's law school in 1952. Netsch's early career included working as a private practice attorney, campaigning for Adlai Stevenson, and serving as an aide to Governor Otto Kerner. In 1965, she joined the faculty of the Northwestern School of Law and helped pave the way for women in legal education. She was a delegate to the 1970 Illinois Constitutional Convention and, two years later, she was elected to the Illinois State Senate. She served in the Illinois Senate for 18 years before being elected Comptroller of Illinois in 1990. Netsch made history again in 1994 as a "straight shooter" when she ran for Governor of Illinois.

Timothy Nugent

Timothy Nugent has devoted his entire professional life to transforming lives through the development of technologies that enhance mobility. Dr. Nugent founded the Division of Disability Resources and Educational Services in 1948 at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. It was the first post-secondary disability support service program in the world. Early in his career, Nugent utilized ramps he built in his garage to help veterans injured in World War II take advantage of the GI Bill. He went on to lead his program toward many firsts, including curb cuts, fixed-route buses with wheelchair lifts, the first National Wheelchair Basketball Tournament, and founding a fraternity dedicated to serving those with disabilities. In addition, Nugent was instrumental in the development of architectural accessibility standards that shaped laws throughout the nation. Nugent's work in disability services has positively impacted millions of lives around the world.

The 2011 Convocation and Dinner Chairs are Stanley and Judy Ikenberry and Michael and Virginia Hogan. Planning Committee members include Dena Bagger, Margaret Cline, Cheryl Easter, Jodi Ferris, Kim Fox, Donna Greene, Clare Haussermann, Babette Hiles, Virginia Hogan, Judy Ikenberry, Nancy Ikenberry and Carol Scharlau. Civic Committee members include Clint Atkins, Craig Bazzani, Dave Downey, Hon. Jim Edgar, Kim Fox, Rita Henneman, Jim Leonard, Greg Lykins, Douglas Mills, Tom Ramage and Carol Scharlau.

The Lincoln Academy of Illinois, unique among the 50 states, was established in 1964 to honor Illinois' most distinguished citizens, either by birth or residence, who have brought honor to the state by their achievements. Prior recipients of The Order of Lincoln include President Ronald Reagan, the Chicago Bears' Walter Payton, Poet Laureate Gwendolyn Brooks, author David Herbert Donald, business leader Lester Crown, Nobel scientist Leon Lederman, and educator Stanley Ikenberry. For more information, visit www.thelincolnacademyofillinois.org.

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