

January 10, 2008

ITEM 138-2001-R0108

Authorization to Confer the Title of Professor Emeritus of Statistics upon Kenneth J. Tiaht; Montana State University-Bozeman

THAT:

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Kenneth J. Tiaht from the faculty of Montana State University, the Board of Regents wishes to express its appreciation for his service to the University, the Montana University System, and the people of the State of Montana.

EXPLANATION:

Dr. Kenneth J. Tiaht received his B.S. in Mathematics from Augustana College in 1957 and his M.S. in Mathematics at Kansas State University in 1959. He then served as Instructor and Assistant Professor at Dana College until 1964 when he enrolled in the statistics program at Oklahoma State University. He held an NSF Science Faculty Fellowship during 1964-65 and completed his Ph.D. in Mathematics and Statistics in 1967. That fall he joined the Department of Mathematics at Montana State University. He spent the next 27 years at MSU.

Dr. Tiaht taught statistics for 10 years and was actively involved in directing graduate students and providing statistical consulting across the campus. He directed the dissertation work of six Ph.D. students during this time. He helped formalize the Statistics Center as a mechanism to assist researchers from many diverse fields on and off campus. In 1976 he spearheaded the creation of the Montana Chapter of the American Statistical Association. Later, he served a two-year term on the National Board of Directors of the American Statistical Association. On July 1, 1977 he became Head of the Department of Mathematics. His vision was to strengthen the research base in the Department and combine that with the already exceptional teaching tradition.

During his time as Department Head, Dr. Tiaht transformed the Department into one that is recognized today as a premier research and teaching program in the Rocky Mountain region. He guided the Department through several significant milestones. This included changing the department name to the Department of Mathematical Sciences in 1979 to emphasize the broader components of mathematics, mathematics education, and statistics. In addition, he spearheaded the creation of the M.S. in Statistics and the Ph.D. in Statistics, both of which were authorized by the Montana Board of Regents in 1980. Over the years, his strategic hiring decisions led to the collection of an

extraordinary department faculty. He also arranged the purchase of the first computers for use by individual faculty and staff in most Letters and Science departments and in the office of the Dean of the College of Engineering. These were the first computers ever intended for individual faculty use at MSU. He later augmented these personal computers by obtaining a state-of-the-art departmental computer. He also arranged the setup of the first computer lab intended for general student use at MSU. After 16 years as Department Head (which equals the second longest tenure as department head in this Department since 1901), Dr. Tiahrt stepped down and one year later, in 1994, he retired from MSU. In 2003, he was the first recipient of the Chapter Service Award from the Montana Chapter of the American Statistical Association. His official citation read "To Kenneth J. Tiahrt in recognition of his success in founding the Montana Chapter of the American Statistical Association and for outstanding and dedicated service, including many years as the Council of Chapters Representative."

For these and other contributions, the Board of Regents of Higher Education is pleased to confer upon Kenneth J. Tiahrt the rank of Professor Emeritus of Statistics at Montana State University and wishes him well for many years in the future.