

September 18-19, 2024

**ITEM: 214-2016-R0924**

**Request for authorization to confer the title of Dean Emerita of Honors and Professor Emerita of Music upon Dr. Ilse-Mari Lee; Montana State University**

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**THAT**

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Dean Ilse-Mari Lee from the Honors College and School of Music, College of Arts and Architecture at Montana State University, the Board of Regents wishes to express its appreciation for their service to the University, the Montana University System, and the people of the State of Montana.

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**EXPLANATION**

Dr. Lee accepted a faculty appointment in the MSU School of Music in 1989. Dr. Lee distinguished herself as a mentor to some of MSU's most promising students. She effectively and consistently prepared students to achieve success and meritorious awards. As a scholar and passionate educator, Dr. Lee has received numerous awards for her work including a Montana Arts Council Individual Fellowship, MSU's Wiley Award for Meritorious Research, MSU's President's Excellence in Teaching Award and many other excellence in teaching awards. She also helped develop the music technology program in the School of Music. In 1998 Dr. Lee founded the MSU Cello Ensemble, touring and performing throughout the region, as well as visiting Italy, Europe and China. In China the ensemble performed on the Great Wall. She led *Great Expeditions* programs of MSU honors students to Russia, England, Ireland, and South Africa.

As a composer she re-envisioned and composed the MSU Alma Mater. She also wrote, composed, and/or performed: Cello Concerto (*Mandela*) in 2002 for the Billings Symphony; *The Yellowstone Suite* (2006); *Sacajawea: A Woman's Life in Words and Music*; and *American Veteran: A Story Without Words* (2022) – a collaboration with the Billings Symphony and photographer Marcus "Doc" Cravens. In 1992 she premiered the Cello Concerto, *Opus 55*, by Eric Funk. Additionally, she composed several film scores. Finally, she performed at Montana's prestigious Tippet Rise Art Center.

Dr. Lee advocated for music education for all and recognized the importance of music in everyone's life. As a tireless advocate for students, she maintained a view of the whole person and worked to ensure students knew about and used resources for mental health and wellness. Her vision for the ways honors education is important at a land grant institution shaped the successful program at MSU. In 2009, Dr. Lee was appointed as director of the MSU Honors Program and in 2013 the Montana Board of Regents elevated the program to become the MSU Honors College and promoted Dr. Lee to dean. In 2021, Dean Lee established the Honor Bound Program to recruit and retain highly motivated Indigenous students to the Honors College at MSU. The Honors College grew to more than 1,700 students, with students coming from Montana and nearly all 50 states, as well as from around the globe. Dean Lee distinguished herself as a mentor to some of MSU's most accomplished students and is known for her work preparing students to vie competitively for prestigious major award. Under Dean Lee's guidance, numerous MSU students have won such awards as the Rhodes, Truman, Marshall, Gates-Cambridge, Udall and Goldwater scholarships.

For these and other contributions, the Board of Regents of Higher Education is pleased to confer on Dean Ilse-Mari Lee the rank of Dean Emerita of Honors and Professor Emeritus of Music at Montana State University and wishes her well for many years into the future.

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**ATTACHMENTS**

None