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Subject Richard Leakey on

To: All Faculty and Staff

Dear Colleagues:

I am delighted to invite you to a special event in this year's Provost's Lecture series on Friday, September 28th when world-renowned conservationist, paleoanthropologist and activist, Richard Leakey will speak on the topic "Leadership in Turbulent Times". Dr. Leakey's lecture will begin at 4:30 p.m. in Main Stage, Staller Center.

Tickets will be available in advance from the Staller Box Office from noon, Thursday September 19th (a limit of four per person). Standby seating will be available on a first come, first served basis so people with tickets should take their seats by 4:15p.m. to be sure of a place. Faculty wishing to take a class to this lecture should go to the Staller Box office in person and present faculty ID or should send a representative with a signed letter to request tickets for a class. Please be sure to request only enough tickets that you will use to avoid disappointing others. I have attached a biography of Dr. Leakey for your information. I look forward to seeing you next Friday.

- Robert McGrath, Provost and Exec. VP for Academic Affairs

Biography of Richard E.F. Leakey

For more than 30 years Richard Leakey has made international headlines for his work in Kenya. As the world's best-known paleoanthropologist, his name alone draws huge crowds to his lectures, and his books are frequent best sellers. Heir to the legacy of his parents, famed fossil-hunters Louis and Mary Leakey, Richard Leakey has been credited with some of this century's most successful paleoanthropological finds. Initially, he seemed completely disinterested in his parents line of work. In fact, during their fossil-finding excursions, Leakey would occupy himself by tracking wild animals nearby. Richard Leakey enjoyed tracking and observing animals so much that at 17 he left school to establish a photographic safari company. His new venture soon became a thriving enterprise. Despite his avowed disinterest in paleoanthropology, Leakey found himself drawn to questions about prehistory. While still in his teens, he teamed up with a former colleague of his parents to go on fossil-hunting expeditions at Lake Natron on the Kenya-Tanzania border. In 1967, Leakey joined an international fossil-hunting expedition in Ethiopia's Lower Omo Valley serving as the team-leader for Kenya. On a flight from Omo for a visit to Nairobi, Leakey made what is now considered a legendary discovery. Peering outside of the airplane window he spotted what appeared to be fossil-bearing sedimentary rock. Excited by the possibility, he made a preliminary survey of the area. His suspicions confirmed, he immediately

petitioned the National Geographic Society to fund an exploratory expedition to the area with him as team leader. His youth and relative inexperience notwithstanding, the National Geographic Society agreed to fund the expedition.

Now poised to continue his family's legacy, Richard Leakey set his mind to gaining credibility and respect among his university-trained colleagues. To that end, he decided to apply for the recently-vacated post of Director of the National Museums of Kenya. In a fortuitous turn of fate, Leakey was applying just as Kenya was becoming an independent nation. Nationalistic feelings were running high, and Leakey's status as a Kenyan citizen coupled with his persuasive powers won him the post. Five years later, he organized an excavation of the eastern shore of Lake Turkana and, as he had predicted, it was a veritable treasure trove of ancient hominid fossils. In the 30 years following Leakey's first expedition, he and his team of paleoanthropologists known as "The Hominid Gang" unearthed more than two-hundred hominid fossils. Many of the fossils were of high quality, and the most famous, "Turkana Boy," a Homo erectus some 1.6 million years old, was one of the most complete skeletons ever found.

In 1989, Leakey left his post as Director of the National Museums of Kenya to become Director of the Kenya Wildlife Services (KWS). In this post he spearheaded efforts to end rampant elephant poaching. His efforts drew international support for a ban on the trade of ivory and raised over \$150 million for wildlife conservation. The elephant population has since stabilized and continues to grow. In 1993, Leakey lost both legs in a plane crash. The following year, he resigned as Director of the Kenya Wildlife Service. He then used his leadership skills and considerable influence to raise money for the preservation of Kenyan culture and wildlife. Never one to back down on a challenge, in 1995 Richard Leakey took a stand against the growing corruption in Kenya's government by forming Safina, an opposition party. Although subjected to beatings, death threats, and constant government surveillance, Leakey maintained his crusade against what he considered to be an oppressive regime. He would later return to KWS in 1998 at the request of President Daniel arap Moi, salvaging it from bankruptcy. In 1999 Kenyan President Moi appointed Leakey Head of the Civil Service and Secretary of the Cabinet, a post he held until 2001. During that time Leakey worked closely on a number of national issues, including the fight to end institutionalized corruption in Kenya.

Although no longer active in field work, Richard Leakey remains one of the foremost authorities on wildlife and nature conservation and continues to educate other about the dangers of environmental degradation through his many lectures and books. Leakey has authored or coauthored over 100 scientific articles and presented several television programs, including the 5-part series Making of Mankind and NBC's Earthwatch. In 1995, he was the subject of two television documentaries in England. He is the author of The Sixth Extinction: Patterns of Life and the Future of Mankind, Origins Reconsidered, The Making of Mankind, One Life and other scientific books. His latest book, entitled Wildlife Wars, chronicles his effort to save the African Elephant, focusing on his tenure as Director of Kenya Wildlife Services. Among the various honors bestowed upon Leakey are: honorary Doctorates of Science from Wooster College (1978), Rockford College (1983), and Stony Brook University (1999). He is a member of Sigma Xi; a Royal Anthropological Institute Fellow; an A.A.A.S.

U.S.A. Fellow; an Explorers Club Fellow; and Fellow of the Institute for Cultural Research, U.K. He is also the winner of the 1994 Hubbard Medal of the National Geographic Society.