

BOARD OF REGENTS
EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

SECTION: 21

DATE:

June 21, 2016

RECOMMENDATION

HONORARY DEGREE RECIPIENT

ACTION REQUESTED

It is recommended that the Board of Regents award Laura M. Stanton, head of the Stanton Foundation, an honorary Doctor of Public Service degree.

SUMMARY

Two-time EMU alumna Laura M. Stanton has devoted her life to helping children and youth. She and her husband David created the Stanton Foundation to channel their philanthropic efforts dedicated to causes related to education and adoption. A biography for Ms. Stanton follows on the next page.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

None

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION

The proposed Board action has been reviewed and it is recommended for Board approval.

University Executive Officer

Date

Laura M. Stanton Biography

Through adversity Laura Stanton persevered and has spent her lifetime helping children and youth.

As a two-time alumna of EMU, Laura earned her BS and MA in the College of Education. Laura describes this time in her life as, “coming up the hard way.”

During her undergraduate degree at EMU, Laura ended an abusive marriage in a time when there was no local women’s shelter. Her family did not provide her support, so she relied on her faculty to get her through some of the toughest days of her life. Even though she was enrolled in 22 credit hours at one point, she fondly recalls EMU faculty letting her join in on dance classes as a form of therapeutic recreation.

After Ms. Stanton put herself through her undergraduate degree, she continued her education at EMU completing a Master’s degree. It took Laura nearly 8 years and countless trips back and forth from Jackson to Ypsilanti to finish her degree, but she was determined.

Ms. Stanton spent 20 years as a Jackson Public Schools teacher and was a reading and instructional specialist. Laura also authored a bilingual children’s book “Animals/ Animales” and is working on her second book. She retired from education in 1997 and soon after took her next step toward supporting children in challenging situations.

In 1999 Ms. Stanton and her husband David established the Stanton Foundation, which is dedicated to education and adoption. Currently, Ms. Stanton sponsors the Hillsdale County Teacher of the Year Award and scholarships at Jackson College for non-adopted foster youth. Through countless additional scholarships and educational awards, Laura is leaving her mark in perpetuity.

During her years working on education and homelessness, Ms. Stanton became friends with Dave Thomas, founder of Wendy’s. Dave lovingly referred to Ms. Stanton as “Dr. Laura” as she became an integral part of the annual Wendy’s Charity Classic golf tournament. Ms. Stanton helped coordinate the effort and has raised more than \$2.5 million for the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption and Wendy’s Wonderful Kids program.

In addition, the Stanton Foundation is an annual contributor of the LPGA Pro-Am, and has helped more than 200 foster care children find their “forever home.”

Jackson College recently honored Ms. Stanton with the 2016 Dr. Ethelene Jones Crockett Award. According to Jackson College, “This award is given to a person who has displayed positive and personal involvement in the betterment of humankind and has ongoing contact with JC.”

Though Ms. Stanton suffers from a terminal lung condition, she continues to help others through her Foundation. Ms. Stanton truly models her life as a life of service. She says, “warriors never wait, they act. I fight on and make my mark.”

