

Reception: 1084 words / 7.4 minutes

Hamilton Lugar School Scholarship Reception
Remarks of Michael A. McRobbie
President, Indiana University
University Tower Ballroom
Tuesday, December 3, 2019
6:00 p.m.

1. WELCOME

Thank you, Dean Feinstein. I am very pleased to welcome all of you to this evening's reception, which will be followed by the inaugural scholarship dinner of Indiana University's Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies.

I am very pleased to welcome a member of the Indiana University Board of Trustees who is with us this evening. Trustee Jim Morris, former chief of staff to Indianapolis Mayor Richard Lugar, former president of the Lilly Endowment, and the former executive director of the United Nations World Food Program, is with us tonight. Would you join me in welcoming Trustee Morris?

I also want to extend a special welcome to former Congressman Lee Hamilton, who, as many of you know, serves as a distinguished scholar and professor of practice in the school. Just over a year ago, I had the great pleasure of announcing that the School of Global and International Studies would be named in honor of Congressman Hamilton and his colleague, the late Senator Richard Lugar—who, together, were two of Indiana's and the nation's greatest statesmen of recent times. We will have a tribute to Senator Lugar later in tonight's program. Congressman Hamilton will be introduced more formally, and we will have the opportunity to hear from him later this evening—but would you join me now in welcoming Lee Hamilton?

I am also very pleased to welcome:

- IU alumnus Lieutenant General Thomas Montgomery, the former deputy commander of the United Nations Operation in Somalia,
- John Lugar, the executive director of the Lugar Institute in Washington, D.C, and the son of Richard and Charlene Lugar,

and

- Blair Milo, who serves as the State of Indiana's first Secretary for Career Connections and Talent.

Would you join me in welcoming them?

2. HONORING ROBERT GATES

Another highlight of this evening's scholarship dinner will be a fireside chat with our distinguished guest of honor, former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, whom we are proud to count as an alumnus of Indiana University.

Secretary Gates is an immensely respected public servant and one of Indiana University's most distinguished alumni. He is an outstanding leader who has a long and accomplished career, spanning his time in the military, the intelligence community, business, and higher education, where I first met Secretary Gates when he was president of Texas A& M University. He has earned praise and respect from both sides of the political aisle.

He served as the nation's 22nd defense secretary from 2006 to 2011. Originally appointed by President George W. Bush, he was retained in the position by President Barack Obama, and became the first defense secretary in U.S. history to be asked to remain in office by a newly elected president—which speaks volumes about the regard in which he is held by both sides of politics.

Secretary Gates earned his master's degree in history at IU Bloomington in 1966. He has said that he chose to enroll at IU because of its position as a national leader in the field of Russian and East European studies and U.S. foreign affairs, a reputation, which

I am pleased to say, we enjoy in an even more enhanced form today. His wife, Becky, whom he met at IU, earned her master's degree in education at IU Bloomington in 1967. And their daughter, Eleanor, is a 1997 graduate of the IU School of Journalism, which is now part of the IU Media School.

While still a student at IU, Secretary Gates was recruited to work for the Central Intelligence Agency. He spent nearly 27 years as an intelligence professional, serving six presidents and ultimately rising to the position of director of Central Intelligence, a position he held from 1991 to 1993. He is the only career officer in the history of the CIA to rise from entry-level employee to director.

He also served on the Iraq Study Group, a bipartisan panel charged with assessing the Iraq War. The panel was co-chaired by Congressman Lee Hamilton and former Secretary of State James Baker.

But, of course, his extraordinary public service has not been limited to the federal government.

He has served as president of Texas A&M University, as I mentioned, and as chancellor of the College of William and Mary.

In addition to other board service, he has served on the Board of Directors and Executive Committee of the American Council on Education and on the Board of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges.

He has also been deeply involved in the Boy Scouts of America. He earned the rank of Eagle Scout and received the Distinguished Eagle Scout Award as an adult. He also served on the National Executive Board of the Boy Scouts of America, including a term as the organization's national president.

Secretary Gates has been awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the National Security Medal, and the Presidential Citizens Medal. In addition, he has twice received

the National Intelligence Distinguished Service Medal and has three times received the CIA's highest award, the Distinguished Intelligence Medal.

He is also the recipient of an honorary Indiana University doctoral degree, which I had the pleasure of presenting to him in 2009, when he served as the speaker at IU's Winter Commencement Ceremony. The speech he delivered is widely regarded as one of the finest Commencement speeches in recent IU history.

It is especially fitting during IU's Bicentennial Year that we honor Indiana University's most distinguished alumni, whose remarkably accomplished careers have brought enormous distinction to the university, and so, I am very pleased to add to his honors tonight.

Secretary Gates, would you join me at the podium?

3. PRESENTING THE DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI SERVICE AWARD

This evening, I am honored to recognize our guest of honor, Secretary Robert Gates, with the highest Indiana University award reserved exclusively for alumni of the university—the Distinguished Alumni Service Award.

Unlike other high awards bestowed by Indiana University, only those who have attended Indiana University are eligible to receive the Distinguished Alumni Service Award, and only members of the university community may make nominations, from which the DASA Committee selects the recipients.

The terms of the award, prescribed by the Executive Council of the Indiana University Alumni Association and the Trustees of Indiana University, provide that each candidate shall be “outstanding in a chosen field of endeavor . . . and shall have made significant contributions benefiting the community, the state, the nation, or the university.”

The Distinguished Alumni Service medal is silver and bears the university seal in the middle. Three words—"distinction," "loyalty," and "citizenship"—are imprinted on a crimson band surrounding the seal, and the outer rim is decorated with the blossoms and leaves of the arbutus, the university flower.

The DASA medal is part of a family of university symbols of achievement, which includes the University Medal, the President's Medal for Excellence, the Thomas Hart Benton Mural Medallion, and the Medal for Distinguished Service.

And so, Mr. Secretary, in recognition of your remarkable service to our nation and the renown you have brought to Indiana University, it is a privilege to bestow upon you Indiana University's Distinguished Alumni Service Award.

Congratulations!

Secretary Gates, would you like to say a few words?