

January 6, 2015

ITEM 166-2002-R0115

Authorization to Confer the Title Professor Emeritus of Film and Photography on Ronald

B. Tobias, Montana State University

THAT

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Ronald B. Tobias from the faculty of Montana State University School of Film and Photography, the faculty wishes to express its deep appreciation for his years of dedicated and valued service to the University and the state of Montana by recommending that the rank of Professor Emeritus be conferred upon him by the Board of Regents of the Montana University System.

EXPLANATION

Professor Tobias served for twenty-five years as one of the leading professors of film at Montana State University (MSU). He mentored several generations of students who have now become leaders in the film and applied media industries. He also became one of the leaders of a then-new generation of Montana Public Television producers who redefined the purpose and reputation of KUSM.

Professor Tobias initiated, essentially singlehandedly, a new master of fine arts degree in the then-relatively underappreciated field of science and natural history filmmaking. Through his tireless efforts, he secured a multimillion-dollar commitment from the Discovery Channel to create the MFA in Science and Natural History Filmmaking (SNHF) program at MSU. Professor Tobias created a curriculum for an academic discipline that essentially did not yet exist and carried his idea through the various levels of university and Board of Regents approvals.

The program, which is now in its fourteenth year, has graduated over 100 students who have gone on to redefine a field that has moved to the center of many of the critical issues facing the international community. From the study of polar bears in the arctic to plant life in the tropics to black holes in space, the SNHF graduates have pioneered new ways of communicating scientific information to public audiences with the purpose of improving the world through dynamic media. Many iconic organizations ranging from National Geographic to NASA have not only employed the program's students and graduates but have also placed them in leadership positions. Its students and alumni have garnered multiple Emmys and other awards establishing the MFA in SNHF as the premier program in its field in the world.

For these and other contributions, the Board of Regents of Higher Education is pleased to confer upon Ronald B. Tobias the rank of Professor Emeritus of Film and Photography at Montana State University, and wishes him well for many years in the future.

ATTACHMENTS

No Attachments