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Commencement 2011: Honorary degrees

Lindor Qunaj

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At this year's Commencement, Brown will award honorary degrees to 10 individuals prominent in a variety of fields, including film, public service and historical scholarship.

The recipients were selected by the Board of Fellows of the Corporation, based on recommendations from the Advisory Committee on Honorary Degrees. The committee, which is composed of faculty, staff and students, solicits nominations from the campus community each spring.

Kenneth Roth '77

Roth has served as the executive director of Human Rights Watch since 1993, during which time the organization has grown substantially and now operates in more than 90 countries, documenting war crimes in the Balkans and working to convict Latin American dictators, among many other accomplishments.

After graduating from Brown, Roth continued his studies at Yale Law School and worked in the U.S. Attorney's Office in New York as a federal prosecutor. Roth continues to write pieces on many human rights issues for a wide range of newspapers and academic journals.

Roth will be the speaker at this year's Baccalaureate Service on Saturday, May 28, at 2:30 p.m. There will be a live video broadcast of the ceremony on the Main Green. He will be awarded an honorary degree along with the nine other chosen individuals during Sunday's University Ceremony.

Katie King Crowley '97

Currently the head coach of the women's ice hockey team at Boston College, King Crowley won gold, silver and bronze medals at the 1998, 2002 and 2006 Winter Olympics, respectively. At Brown, she was a star athlete, excelling at both ice hockey and softball. She scored 123 goals on the ice hockey team, setting a still-unbeaten record for the Brown team, and was also named the Ivy League Player of the Year for ice hockey and softball. At the time she retired from the Olympics, she held the record for most goals scored by an American in the games. Crowley has also taught at various hockey development camps.

Arianna Huffington

Co-founder of the widely read news site the Huffington Post, Huffington is also an author, syndicated columnist and host of "Sides Now," a radio program focused on political issues in the United States. Originally from Greece, Huffington moved to the United Kingdom during her teenage years and studied economics at Cambridge University, where she was also the president of the



Courtesy of Bro

Kenneth Roth '77, international rights activist, will receive an honorary degree and deliver remarks at the Baccalaureate Service.

institution's large debating society. In 2009, Forbes magazine included her in its list of the most influential women in media. Huffington has also been involved in California politics, running for governor against Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Nicholas D. Kristof

Kristof, a two-time recipient of the prestigious Pulitzer Prize and a New York Times op-ed columnist, has traveled extensively and reported on issues such as human rights abuses, global health and the environment. In the past seven years, he has traveled to the Darfur region nearly a dozen times and written many columns on the conflict. A 1981 graduate of Harvard, Kristof also studied at Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar and has written a number of books with his wife, Sheryl WuDunn, including the best-selling "Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide." He was the New York Times' first blogger and has a particular interest in online journalism.

David Mumford

Mumford, a professor emeritus of applied mathematics at Brown, joined the University's faculty in 1996, where he helped found the interdisciplinary Brain Science Program. A renowned mathematician, Mumford has studied and made advancements in algebraic geometry, computer vision and pattern theory, and is best known for his invention of geometric invariant theory. In fall 2009, he was awarded the National Medal of Science, the nation's highest scientific honor, for the work he has done throughout his career. His last graduate student advisee graduated last spring, he still maintains ties to the University and his former collaborator:

Jack Nicholson P'12.5

Well-known throughout the world for his roles in films such as "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest," "Terms of Endearment," "Good Men," and "The Departed," Nicholson has worked on more than 60 feature films. He has won three Academy Awards and more nominations than any other male actor in history and in 1999, was awarded a Golden Globe lifetime achievement award for acting. Nicholson has also been involved in directing and producing films, and is a prominent fan of the Los Angeles Lakers, attending virtually all of the NBA team's home games.

Lynn Ida Nottage '86

Nottage, a playwright who went on to study at Yale's School of Drama and then work for the international human rights organization Amnesty International after her time at Brown, has written a number of plays primarily on themes relating to the experiences of African-Americans and women. These very popular shows, which include "Intimate Apparel" and "Ruined," have been produced in many theaters across the country and internationally. Nottage has also received multiple prizes recognizing her work, including a Guggenheim Fellowship in 2005, a MacArthur Genius Award in 2007 and most recently, a Pulitzer Prize in 2009.

Lisa Randall

Currently a professor at Harvard, Randall is one of the most cited figures in the field of theoretical physics. She previously taught at Princeton, where she became the first woman to receive tenure in the school's physics department. Randall, who has been elected into the National Academy of Sciences and has won numerous awards and prizes for her work, researches elementary particle physics and cosmology in an effort to refine and expand understanding of the interactions of matter and the extra dimensions of space.

regular articles, TV and radio appearances and lectures have put her very much in the public eye. In 2007, she was named one of the most influential people of the year by Time magazine.

David R. Scott

Scott, a retired Air Force pilot who studied at West Point and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has been in outer space more than 500 hours. A Gemini and Apollo astronaut, Scott has been involved in numerous missions, including three excursions onto the moon. He also worked as an executive at NASA and was awarded three Distinguished Service Medals for his work at the agency. Since then, Scott has served as a consultant for various TV shows and movies about outer space flight, such as "Apollo 13". He is currently the president of Baron Company Ltd., a company looking into potential opportunities in the commercial space industry.

Zhenkai Zhao

Zhao, also known by his pseudonym Bei Dao, is a Chinese poet of international fame, best recognized for his poem "Answer to a Question". He was initially a member of the pro-Mao Red Guards, he eventually grew critical of the government and his poetry became popular among pro-democracy groups in China. In the late 1980s, he was not permitted to return to his home country and has lived and taught throughout Europe and the United States ever since. Zhao's work has been translated into many different languages. He has been nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature multiple times. Just four years ago, Zhao moved back to Asia with him accepting an offer as a professor of humanities at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Some of his compilations of poetry include "The August Sleepwalker," "Landscape Over Zero" and "The Rose of Time."

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