

JACK R. WARNER

CITATION FOR THE REGENTS' HONARY DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE

In recognition of extraordinary service and leadership to the South Dakota system of public higher education, the South Dakota Board of Regents awards its highest honor, an honorary doctorate in public service, to Dr. Jack R. Warner.

Dr. Warner's six years of service as the Board of Regents' chief executive officer is the second longest tenure of an executive director in the history of the South Dakota public university system. He leaves the system leadership role at a time when public universities in South Dakota are serving a record number of students and pursuing new strategies to ensure that students arrive at college better prepared for academic work, move successfully through their coursework, and graduate on time.

During his time in South Dakota, the public university system reached out to serve increasing numbers of non-traditional students, while moving more courses and degrees online to meet unique student needs. Through special initiatives focused on affordability and efficiency, Dr. Warner led efforts to reduce the number of credits needed to graduate and to merge the administrations for the two special schools serving the deaf and the blind and visually impaired. He expanded research grants and contracts and worked with the South Dakota Legislature to secure state authorization to create university research parks, leading to development of a new research park in Sioux Falls and expansion of another park in Brookings.

Dr. Warner worked with legislators to create the state's first need-based grant program and the Critical Teaching Needs Scholarship program. Under his leadership, the Sanford School of Medicine at the University of South Dakota expanded enrollments by 30 percent, with help from a state appropriation. Another long-term goal was achieved during Dr. Warner's tenure: creating a new Ph.D. program in physics for the University of South Dakota and South Dakota School of Mines & Technology to help support the work of the Sanford Underground Research Facility. He led efforts to redesign remedial coursework, making it more relevant for students, and to improve student retention through use of early-alert systems at each campus.

During his public service in South Dakota, he has worked with 15 regents and 13 institutional executives. Dr. Warner has provided outstanding leadership for many organizations, advocating on behalf of higher education and focusing a national spotlight on South Dakota institutions. While in South Dakota, he served on the executive committee and as chair of the State Higher Education Executive Officers organization, as well as on the executive committee for the National Association of System Heads.

In recognition thereof, the South Dakota Board of Regents, on behalf of the citizens of South Dakota, bestows upon Dr. Jack R. Warner the degree and title, Honorary Doctor of Public Service, reserved for individuals whose exceptional personal and professional contributions merit special acknowledgement.