

(SUNY New Paltz Undergraduate Commencement Script; May 23, 2010)...

President Poskanzer: AT THIS TIME, I WOULD LIKE TO ASK GARY KING TO STEP FORWARD TO RECEIVE AN HONORARY DEGREE.

GARY KING, YOU HAVE DISTINGUISHED YOURSELF AS ONE OF NEW PALTZ'S MOST SUCCESSFUL ALUMNI. STARTING FROM YOUR DAYS AS AN UNDERGRADUATE AT THIS COLLEGE, YOU HAVE CLIMBED TO REMARKABLE HEIGHTS AS A SCHOLAR AND SHAPER OF IDEAS.

A PIONEER IN DEVELOPING AND APPLYING STATISTICAL METHODS IN THE SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES, DR. KING IS CURRENTLY THE ALBERT J. WEATHERHEAD III UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

THE RANK OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR IS HARVARD'S HIGHEST PROFESSIONAL DISTINCTION THAT ONLY 22 HARVARD FACULTY HOLD. THIS DESIGNATION, WHICH IS AWARDED TO INDIVIDUALS "WORKING ON THE FRONTIERS OF KNOWLEDGE... IN SUCH A WAY AS TO CROSS... CONVENTIONAL BOUNDARIES."

THROUGH YOUR LEADERSHIP OF THE INSTITUTE FOR QUANTITATIVE SOCIAL SCIENCE, YOU HAVE CREATED, AND MADE WIDELY AVAILABLE STATISTICAL AND ANALYTICAL TOOLS THAT HAVE GREATLY IMPACTED SOCIETY.

FOR EXAMPLE, YOUR WORK ON LEGISLATIVE REDISTRICTING HAS BEEN UTILIZED BY ELECTED LEADERS AND PRIVATE CITIZENS ACROSS THE NATION, AS WELL AS THE U.S. SUPREME COURT.

YOUR SCHOLARSHIP IS NOT ONLY SIGNIFICANT, BUT ALSO PROLIFIC. YOU HAVE AUTHORED OR CO-AUTHORED MORE THAN 8 BOOKS, 120 JOURNAL ARTICLES—AND BEFITTING YOUR STATISTICAL BENT—15 OPEN SOURCE SOFTWARE PACKAGES.

YOU ARE A WALKING, TALKING, RESEARCHING, CRITIQUING EMBODIMENT OF CROSS-DISCIPLINARY SCHOLARSHIP. LITTLE WONDER THAT THIS SPRING YOU WERE ELECTED TO THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES.

YOUR ALMA MATA DRAWS THE GREATEST OF SATISFACTION—AND NOT A SMALL MEASURE OF PRIDE—IN NOTING THAT YOUR BREATH-TAKING ACADEMIC CAREER WAS LAUNCHED RIGHT HERE. I 1980 NEW PALTZ ALUMNUS, YOU SET THE MOST INSPIRATIONAL EXAMPLE FOR TODAY'S GRADUATES. WE HOPE THAT AMONG THE GOWN-BEDECKED RANKS BEFORE YOU ARE FUTURE SCHOLARS WHO WILL SEEK TO EMULATE YOU.

FOR ALL OF THIS, WE CELEBRATE WITH YOU AS THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK WELCOMES YOU HOME WITH A TIGHT EMBRACE AND BESTOWS UPON YOU THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF HUMANE LETTERS, HONORIS CAUSA.