INDIANA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF NURSING
Office of the Dean

January 10, 2011

Charles R. Bantz, Chancellor, IUPUI
355 N. Lansing Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202

Dear Chancellor Bantz,

I am joining Dean William Blomquist in nominating **Ulla M. Connor** for an IUPUI Chancellor's Professorship. Since I am not a member of her field, I am limited in how much I can speak technically to her scholarship, but I can testify to the distinction of her achievements, particularly her founding of the Indiana Center for Intercultural Communication (ICIC) because I served on the ICIC Advisory Board from its inception through June 2003. In 2009, I moderated and spoke at the 10th anniversary ICIC symposium on "Language in Health Care," which was itself an excellent example of how Dr. Connor's work has been boundary-spanning in enriching our campus.

Professor Connor's Curriculum Vitae is that of a very distinguished international scholar. Her principal professional organization—Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)—has repeatedly highlighted her work as exemplary both in its annual "Breakfast Star" Program, whereby graduate students and junior faculty can meet dignitaries in the field, and in the teaching that association has made available through a series of International Summer Institutes. It just so happens that I have gotten to know a rather large number of TESOL faculty around the country (my younger daughter has interests that touch this area), and more than one of them has described her as a "rock star" within TESOL circles because of the conceptual richness of her work in contrastive rhetoric. She is much in demand as a lecturer and examiner around the world; I have actually had the experience of going to some faraway spot as a consultant and being asked if I know Professor Connor (this happened to me most recently at Hong Kong Polytechnic University). Her election to The Finnish Society of Sciences and Letters in 2000 is proof of her sterling reputation because that august group is highly selective, much the way our National Academies are.

What I find most remarkable about her work is the way she has taken the concerns of a practice field—English as a Second Language—as her phenomena of concern and has plumbed key conceptual issues in ways that have moved forward the theoretical underpinnings of her field, particularly in terms of contrastive rhetoric, while simultaneously serving the interests of education and practice. ICIC is a unique center. Like all centers, it values research and research training, but this Center has developed new linguistic text banks by addressing the practical concerns of institutional clients (e.g., the fundraising community and healthcare professionals to name two disparate populations) thus extending the writing samples available to future graduate students as they try to understand practical problems. This cycle of (a) using practice to (b) shape research questions which when answered (c) develop the knowledge base available to the next generation of scholars is a familiar one to scholars in the basic and social sciences. Professor Connor has creatively introduced this model into teaching English as a second

language, and in the process has managed to transform an important area of growing interest around the world, e.g., her work has been translated into Swedish, Finnish, and Chinese.

So impressed was the Founding Chair of ICIC's Advisory Board with the Center's achievements in interweaving teaching, research, and practice that he and his wife decided to endow the Zimmer Chair in Intercultural Communication, the first endowed chair in the School of Liberal Arts. That kind of community support is evidence of ICIC's worth that goes well beyond the conventional metrics of attracting graduate students and refereed publications/presentations. ICIC has been in existence for a dozen years, and the Center is thriving with grant and contract support typically not seen in a School of Liberal Arts, for example, the Lilly Foundation has supported a major project concerned with health literacy and it has recently been awarded a Signature Center Initiative Grant.

The Chancellor's Professorship is awarded not only to a distinguished scholar, but one who has contributed mightily to the well-being of the campus through teaching and service. Dr. Connor was instrumental in developing Indiana's first endorsement program for English-as-a-second-language K-12 teachers and she has played a leadership role in the development of two MA programs, including one in TESOL to accommodate the great demand for such teachers in Indiana. This leadership is not only important to IUPUI as a campus, but to the economic well-being of the state as immigration patterns change and there is great interest in attracting internationals to Indianapolis as business partnerships become more global in reach. Dr. Connor's service to IUPUI has been equally creative. Collaborating with the IUPUI Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, Professor Connor has developed a program to facilitate the experience of doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows for whom English is a second language. In this project and many others, Professor Connor demonstrated her commitment to interdisciplinary issues. Where I particularly saw her shine is when she chaired the Faculty Council's Planning Committee and served on the Futures Group (2001-03) where she worked with key administrators in strategic planning for the campus. Another example of her extensive service is the fact that she has long held adjunct faculty positions in Women's Studies and Philanthropic Studies, and has contributed mightily to the development of those interdisciplinary programs.

Professor Connor is, in my opinion, one of IUPUI's most distinguished scholars. She has developed new academic programs, with the ICIC her most enduring legacy. She has been boundary spanning in her interdisciplinary committee work. In summary, she is the very essence of what an IUPUI Chancellor's Professor should be. I fear that because she holds an endowed chair, she may be perceived as not "needing" to be named to this distinction too, but I would urge not falling into that kind of thinking because being a Chancellor's Professor is a different kind of honor, one that acknowledges the impact a person has had on the campus as a whole. And Dr. Connor has had enormous impact on the campus, from her work with Catholic Charities of Indianapolis to her 17-year-old partnership with Tsuda College in Japan, and her role in bringing major intercultural rhetoric and written discourse conferences to IUPUI in 2005, 2006, 2008 and 2012.

Sincerely,

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Angela Barron McBride is Distinguished Professor-University Dean Emerita at Indiana University School of Nursing. She is a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing, of the National Academies of Practice, and the American Psychological Association's Division 35 on the Psychology of Women and Division 38 on Health Psychology. She has received honorary doctorates from the University of Cincinnati, Eastern Kentucky University, Georgetown University, Medical College of Ohio, University of Akron, and Purdue University, and the University of San Francisco has honored her with its University Medallion. In 1995, she received the "Outstanding Contributions to Nursing and Health Psychology" Award from the American Psychological Association's Division on Health Psychology. That same year, she was elected to membership in the Institute of Medicine, The National Academies.