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Honorary Degree Award Citation for Robert Below

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Honorary Degree Awarded to Retiring Faculty

Robert Below, Professor of Piano

"Robert Below, for thirty-two years you have distinguished yourself as a pianist, harpsichordist, organist, composer, lecturer, teacher, and coach at Lawrence University and beyond.

As a performer, your numerous appearances echo in the memories of all who have been privileged to hear them. In concerto, recital, chamber music, or accompanying, the depth of your interpretive insight, your command of your instrument, and the beauty of your sound continue to delight your devoted audiences. A musician's musician who can beguile even the most sophisticated of musical *cognoscenti*, you are also known for programs with a didactic dimension devoted to a single composer such as Bach, Haydn, or Ravel; to the music of the Americas, France, or the Twentieth Century; or to lecture recitals on the *Goldberg Variations* of Johann Sebastian Bach and the late works of Claude Debussy.

A performer of distinction, you have also been productive as a composer, adding your personal and prolific expression to the literature for voice, chorus, chamber music, keyboard, strings, and symphony orchestra. You have also brought honors to Lawrence with your selection as a winner of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra Wisconsin Composers Fanfare Competition and by your receipt of the Distinguished Alumnus Award of the School of Music of the University of Louisville, accompanied by a four-day residency and performance of your compositions.

As a teacher, you have reached, the record shows, nearly twelve hundred Lawrence students in the piano studio, in chamber music, and in the classroom, where for the Conservatory students you have taught piano literature, music history, and music theory, and for college students the course affectionately known as "Tunes Ten." Fittingly, your students, too, have brought honor to the University, most recently in 1995, when one was awarded the National Federation of Music Clubs prize scholarship.

Robert Below, in this, your final year in active service to Lawrence University, no fewer than fifteen programs have featured your performances, students, and compositions, indicative in part of how much we shall miss your presence, your probing musicianship, your dedication to your art and your students, your dry humor, and even your participation in hotly contested volleyball games at the annual Conservatory picnic. May your association with Lawrence University continue long and productively.

By the authority vested in me, I now confer upon you the degree of Master of Arts, *ad eundem*, and admit you to its rights, its privileges, and its obligations."

Citation read by President Richard Warch at Commencement, 1996