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Honorary Degree Award Citation for Jerald Podair

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Jerald Podair

JERALD PODAIR, over the course of your 23-year career at Lawrence you have distinguished yourself as one of the University's most productive scholars and admired teachers. A specialist in 20th century United States history, you have published award-winning books on an extraordinarily wide range of topics, from the building of Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles to the life of Bayard Rustin.

A *magna cum laude* graduate of New York University who went on to earn the *juris doctorate* at Columbia University, you came a bit late to the study of history, entering the Master's program in Princeton after an 11-year career as a practicing attorney in New York City. Once in the zone, though, you made up the time, earning the Ph.D. in history at Princeton with a dissertation that examined race relations in postwar New York and won the Society of American Historians' Allan Nevins Prize. That dissertation became the basis for your first book, *The Strike that Changed New York*, published by Yale University Press in 2002 and a finalist for the Organization of American Historians' Liberty Legacy Foundation Award. A more recent book, *City of Dreams: Dodger*

Stadium and the Birth of Modern Los Angeles, was a finalist for the PEN/ESPN Award for Literary Sports Writing and won the 2018 Seymour Medal of the Society for American Baseball Research. You are currently completing your eighth book, *Promised Lands: A History of the American People in the Twentieth Century*.

An elected fellow of the New York Academy of History and a member of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission, you have twice won Lawrence's faculty award for excellence in scholarly activity. You have received the University's faculty convocation award. The inaugural holder of the Robert S. French Chair in American Studies, and a past chair of the History department, you developed and introduced several popular courses into the History curriculum, including courses on the Civil War, the 1960s, the Kennedy assassination, and the civil rights movement.

Jerry, in recognition of your many contributions to Lawrence and its students, I am pleased to award you the degree of Master of Arts, *ad eundem*, on the occasion of your retirement from the faculty.

June 13, 2021