Laura Bornholdt, native of Illinois, you went East to college and graduate school, remained there to teach and to administer, then returned to the Midwest as a leader for education in the world of foundations. Always concerned to strengthen intellectual quality, you have drawn upon your historian's training at Smith College and at Yale University, where you earned the Ph.D., to discern the trends and the needs of higher education. You have acted upon your comprehensive and penetrating understanding of the groves of academe to direct substantial resources from the Danforth Foundation and the Eli Lilly Endowment where they could have greatest impact. You have helped stimulate the rejuvenation of liberal arts education, deepen and extend the field of Black Studies into college and university curricula, support doctoral work in all disciplines among scholars from racial minority backgrounds, and establish the faculty development movement which is now reaching full bloom across the nation.

You early discerned the threat to the normal professional growth and advancement of younger faculty from declining student enrollments and the resulting loss of faculty mobility. You also grasped the potential for intellectual and curricular stagnation on campuses where the infusion of young faculty was inhibited. You were one of the first in the country to design programs to help faculty expand their intellectual interests in the service of the curricula at their colleges and universities. At the same time, you understood that by helping faculty of all ages acquire new perspectives and competencies you would thereby increase their mobility and thus their sense of self-confidence and self-worth. In doing so, you encouraged colleges and universities to foster renewal of intellectual excitement among faculty members whose tenure was likely to extend from three to four decades in the same institution.

Through the Danforth Postdoctoral Program in Black Studies and the Lilly Faculty Open Fellowships, to name just two of your creations, you challenged college faculty to risk being students again, and to bring back to their classrooms their renewed excitement for learning.

In this creative work, you have nurtured several generations of leaders in higher education. Seeking no attention for yourself, you have quietly but energetically drawn people of talent together to discover new approaches to teaching and learning, to lay the foundations for new academic fields, and to select individuals who could best benefit from these efforts, requiring them to return to their home institutions after their experience to share the fruits with others. Thus have you used foundation dollars to strengthen higher education by helping individual teachers develop the best within themselves.

As Dean of Women at the University of Pennsylvania and as Dean of the College at Sarah Lawrence and as Dean of the College at Wellesley, you were a leader among women. At the Danforth Foundation and the Lilly Endowment, you were a leader among men. You have demonstrated in both arenas qualities of professionalism, practicality, and clarity of purpose which have inspired respect. Your handwritten notes in an age of word-processed correspondence reflect the integrity and directness of your relationships with others and your love and respect for the English language. Your letters are known to carry great weight. It is rumored that for one recent presidential search, you were on the list of references for each of the four finalists.

To join us today, you have given up your class reunion at Smith College because you understood that in allowing Wilkes College to recognize your contributions, the College would deepen its commitment to faculty development. You will return to the University of Chicago where you are helping President Hannah Holborn Gray to find ways to bring the resources of the University to meet human needs of the surrounding community. From there you will continue to attend to your responsibilities as editor of educational journals, as one of the leaders monitoring the impact of the recent national reports on the undergraduate curriculum, as a program innovator...
sensitive to the latest educational trends, and as college trustee and advisor to college presidents. We salute you as a national mentor to the leaders of learning.

By the power vested in me by the Board of Trustees and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, I confer upon Laura Bornholdt the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, with all the rights and privileges appertaining thereto.