

The Lincoln Academy of Illinois

Old State Capitol * Springfield, IL 62701 * (217) 785-5030 * FAX (217) 523-9792

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CONTACT:
Julie Kellner
(217) 785-5030

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Seven to receive state's highest award, The Order of Lincoln

2012 Laureates of The Lincoln Academy announced

SPRINGFIELD – As the Land of Lincoln prepares to celebrate the 203rd birthday of Abraham Lincoln, Governor Pat Quinn today announced seven distinguished Illinoisans who will receive The Order of Lincoln, the state's highest award.

“The men and women receiving the Order of Lincoln have dedicated themselves to improving their communities and helping their neighbors,” said Governor Quinn. “These worthy recipients truly reflect the selflessness embodied by our nation's sixteenth president, and we thank them for their service.”

The Order of Lincoln Medallion will be presented by The Lincoln Academy of Illinois officials at a special ceremony Saturday, April 21 at the Illinois State Capitol in Springfield. The 2012 Laureates include:

Jean Driscoll

Jean Driscoll has inspired countless individuals worldwide as a competitive racer. Driscoll was born with spina bifida and started using a wheelchair at the age of 15. She pursued athletic opportunities in high school and was subsequently recruited to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She was the first person to win the Boston Marathon eight times, and her career success in Boston includes numerous course and world records. In addition, she won two Olympic medals, 12 Paralympic medals, and holds the world record in the 10,000 meter track event. Driscoll is a motivational speaker and also works as the Associate Director of Development in the College of Applied Health Sciences at the University of Illinois.

W. James Farrell

W. James Farrell is the Retired Chairman of Illinois Tool Works, a multinational manufacturer of highly engineered fasteners, components, assemblies and systems. Illinois Tool Works, which experienced extraordinary growth under Farrell's leadership, is comprised of approximately 900 decentralized operations in 57 countries. Farrell is Chairman of The Civic Committee, Vice Chairman of The Commercial Club, and a member of the Economic Club of Chicago. Cultural and civic affiliations for Farrell include former Chairman and Director of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, Director of Lyric Opera of Chicago, and Director of The Big Shoulders Fund.

James Arthur Lovell, Jr.

Captain James Lovell was selected in September 1962 for the space program following his experience as a Naval Aviator and Test Pilot. He executed various commands in the Gemini mission program, including pilot on the Gemini 7 flight, which saw the rendezvous of two manned spacecraft in 1965. At the close of the Gemini program, Lovell became Command Module Pilot and Navigator on Apollo 8, backup commander on Apollo 11, and spacecraft commander on the perilous Apollo 13 mission in 1970. In 1973, Lovell left the space program to pursue a successful career as President of Bay-Houston Towing Company and Fisk Telephone Systems. In 1994, Lovell and Jeff Kluger co-wrote a book about the Apollo 13 mission, *Lost Moon*. His awards and honors include the Presidential Medal for Freedom and the French Legion of Honor.

Naomi Burgos Lynn

Dr. Naomi Burgos Lynn served as the President of Sangamon State University in Springfield beginning in 1991 and through its reorganization into the University of Illinois Springfield. She was the first Hispanic woman president of an American public university. Lynn has published extensively in the fields of political science and public administration, and she has served as President of the American Society for Public Administration, the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration, and the Women's Caucus for Political Science. She retired as the first Chancellor of the University of Illinois Springfield in 2001.

Robert J. Miller

Staff Sergeant Robert Miller was the second of eight children of Phil and Maureen Miller. As a youth growing up in Wheaton, he was the kind of student who would "go the extra mile," and he was proud of his family's longstanding service to the country. As a soldier, he continued to distinguish himself by earning the title Green Beret. On the night of January 25, 2008 Miller, at the age of 24, was serving as the weapons sergeant in Special Forces Operational Detachment Alpha 3312, Special Operations Task Force 33, Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force Afghanistan. Following an engagement with insurgents, Miller was killed when he drew fire from over 100 enemy fighters away

from his team and upon himself. On October 6, 2010 President Barack Obama awarded Staff Sergeant Miller the Medal of Honor “for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call the duty.”

“We are honored that our son, Staff Sergeant Robert J. Miller, is being awarded the Order of Lincoln. Rob was a sixth generation Illinoisan who was proud of his family's long history of service to the nation, including under President Lincoln. We are grateful to the people of Illinois for honoring those who serve to preserve our country's freedoms and particularly one who has made the ultimate sacrifice,” said Robert's parents, Maureen and Phil Miller.

William R. Schnirring

William R. Schnirring, a lifelong resident of Springfield, is the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Springfield Electric Supply Company. With its corporate headquarters in Springfield and branch offices throughout Illinois, Iowa and Missouri, Springfield Electric Supply Company is one of the 50 largest electrical supply companies in the nation. Schnirring has received numerous awards for his business leadership and volunteer service, including a Copley Newspaper First Citizen Award. Schnirring has volunteered for decades to provide leadership to numerous non-profit boards and has worked behind the scenes to create new opportunities for residents of Illinois. He has received numerous awards for his service related to education, conservation, and philanthropy.

N. Ronald Thunman

Vice Admiral N. Ronald Thunman served in numerous fields during 35 years of active duty in the United States Navy. As Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Submarine Warfare, he determined the requirements and directed all programs involving submarines and submarine support and managed the planning and execution of an \$18 billion annual budget. He has served numerous tours aboard submarines, including as commanding officer, and has served as the Commander Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, with fifty nuclear attack submarines and ten POLARIS strategic submarines under his command. Following his retirement from the Navy, Admiral Thunman has served in several significant roles in private business. He holds the Navy Distinguished Service Medal (two awards) and Legion of Merit (four awards).

The Civic Committee Chairs for this year's Laureate ceremony are Don and Wanda Tracy. The Sponsorship Chair is Daniel Cadigan, and the Ticket Sales Chair is Karen Hasara.

The Lincoln Academy of Illinois, unique among the 50 states, was established in 1964 to honor Illinois' most distinguished citizens, either by birth or residence, who have

brought honor to the state by their achievements. Prior recipients of The Order of Lincoln include President Ronald Reagan, the Chicago Bears' Walter Payton, Poet Laureate Gwendolyn Brooks, author David Herbert Donald, business leader Lester Crown, Nobel scientist Leon Lederman, and educator Stanley Ikenberry. For more information, visit www.thelincolnacademyofillinois.org.

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