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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## University City High School to Induct 11 into Hall of Fame

University City, MO -- U. S. Ambassador to Malawi, Virginia E. Palmer, is one of 11 alums to be inducted into the University City High School (UCHS) Hall of Fame, tonight, Friday, October 13, at The Sheraton Plaza Hotel (7730 Bonhomme Ave., 63105).

In accepting the invitation to come back "home" for the award, Palmer said she was honored, "I credit University City High School with teaching me to appreciate real diversity and laying the foundation for everything I've done since." Ambassador Palmer will visit her alma mater and talk with students at 9:30 a.m. this morning (Fri., Oct. 13).

The program, moderated by Alan Spector ('64/HF'11), features Marlon West ('81/HF02) Disney's lead effects animator, who will deliver the keynote speech. West spent time with UCHS students yesterday (Oct. 12) as he shared his pathway from the halls of UCHS to the halls of Disney.

The distinguished group of 2017 inductees are Jack Fishman ('66), Marlene Scheinkman Hammerman ('69), the late Hasan Houston ('76), Robert Kalish ('58), Jim Katzman ('64), Tony Neal ('79), Jerry Sugerman ('59), Virginia E. Palmer ('79), Alex Williams (75), Todd Williams ('85) and Andy Woods ('75). (See biography information attached.)

UCHS Principal Susan Hill says, "We are overwhelmed at the response of our alumni in support of the high school and our students. Some inductees still live in the area, but others are coming from across the country. Ambassador Palmer came from Malawi to accept her honor and to visit with students." She added, "Just reading through this list of accomplished individuals makes me even more proud to be a part of this amazing high school family and this wonderful tradition of honoring excellence."

The UCHS Hall of Fame is a main artery in the historic school building and the framed photos -- a daily source of inspiration. "Students pass through the Hall of Fame as they move about the day," Hill added. "It is not unusual to hear one of them declare they will be on that wall one day."

The District has, in fact, consistently graduated students whose names are now nationally recognized and credited with significant contributions, creations, innovations and breakthroughs.

For HOF ticket information, call the University City Education Foundation's Director of Development Lori Willis at 314-456-5457, email [lwillis@ucityschools.org](mailto:lwillis@ucityschools.org) or visit [ucityschools.org/HOF](http://ucityschools.org/HOF).

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The UCHS Hall of Fame was established in 1999 for the purpose of honoring graduates from each era of history. These are individuals who have brought honor to the school through notable contributions to their fields and to the world. Although the induction event occurs every other year, each January the District publicly calls for nominations.

Read more about the UCHS HOF, including how to nominate and information about its prestigious members at [ucityschools.org/HallOfFame](http://ucityschools.org/HallOfFame).

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## **Jack Fishman**

Earth & Atmospheric Sciences

Jack Fishman, PhD, professor of Meteorology at Saint Louis University, is a leader in the field of atmospheric chemistry. He spent most of his career at the NASA Langley Research Center in Hampton, Va. where he researched methods of measuring air pollution using satellites and earned NASA's Exceptional Scientific Achievement Medal. Fishman helped establish The St. Louis Ozone Garden Project to educate the public on the detrimental impact of increasing background ozone concentrations on crops and vegetation.

2017 UCHS Class of 1966

## **Marlene Scheinkman Hammerman**

Social Justice & Women's Rights Activist

Marlene S. Hammerman has long been associated with the National Council of Jewish Women-St. Louis and the fight for individual rights and social justice. She has provided testimony and engaged elected officials on the topics of reproductive justice, domestic and gun violence, trafficking, immigration and healthcare reform along with voting and LGBT rights. She has proudly served on every UCHS Class of 1969 Reunion committee since graduation and helped install the NCJW Kids Community Closet at her elementary school, Barbara C. Jordan (formerly Daniel Boone).

2017 UCHS Class of 1969

## **Hasan Houston**

Tri-sport Athlete, Probation Officer & Coach

From shooting hoops at Heman Park to burning up the hardwood as a professional player, the late Hasan Abdul Houston was a legend in his own time. A three-sport standout in high school, he averaged 31 points each game and scored 55 points in a single game. He earned the St. Louis Post-Dispatch All-Metro, St. Louis Globe Democrat All-District, All-State honors and a college scholarship. He played collegiate and professional sports, but due to timing and chance, his career was cut short. A leader on and off the court, he served others as a U.S. probation officer and a life coach, developed mentoring programs for youth. In 2012, UCHS officially dedicated the Hasan Houston (basketball) Court.

2017 UCHS Class of 1976

## **Robert Kalish**

Journalist, Educator & Author

From Hollywood to the Vietnam War - working in newspaper, television and radio - Robert Kalish is a mentor to multiple generations as he earned his reputation for hard driving coverage of major events including the dismantling of Maine's only nuclear power plant and closing of a major naval base. In the way that life often imitates art, his experiences likely influenced fictional lead, Skipper Gould, a reporter for a small newspaper turned navy seal in his three-book series. In retirement, he continues to write and "explore the difference between craft and art."

2017 UCHS Class of 1958

### **James Katzman**

Co-Founder of Tandem Computers, Inc.

Just six years after earning an engineering degree from Purdue University, Jim Katzman co-founded Tandem Computers Inc. (now a part of Hewlett Packard). He earned an MSEE from Stanford and amassed a number of patents. He helped propel HP and Amdahl Corp., to Fortune 500 status by designing the NonStop™ System that supports a host of functions from gas pump transactions to the HP 3000 computer. He was founding council chair at the University of California where scientists, working with the Katzman Automated Imaging Telescope, helped discover 2011's Nobel prize-winning Dark Energy. He has earned awards for lifetime achievement and community service and is listed in the "Who's Who in Technology Today."

2017 UCHS Class of 1964

### **Anthony W. Neal**

Social Justice Leader & Businessman

President/CEO of Educational Equity Consultants, executive director of the Center for Educational Equity and an adjunct professor, Tony Neal is known for helping people and communities utilize education to balance the scales of opportunity and justice while eradicating roadblocks to equity and equality as exemplified in his book, "Becoming a Social Justice Leader: Using Head, Heart, and Hands to Dismantle Oppression." He serves on various boards in support of education and social justice including the Royal Vagabond, Inc. Foundation and is engaged in mission work in El Salvador.

2017 UCHS Class of 1979

### **Virginia E. Palmer**

U.S. Ambassador to Malawi

Virginia E. Palmer, U.S. Ambassador to Malawi, attended Washington University in St. Louis, holds a BSFS from Georgetown University and a masters degree from the University of Virginia. But, when she experiences different cultures, confronts governments and organizations sometimes hostile to the U.S., she relies on lessons UCHS taught her about diversity and being true to one's self. Palmer, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, has served the State Department in the areas of counterterrorism and economic policy. In 2015, she rose to her present position as Ambassador to Malawi. Palmer is a recipient of two Department of State senior performance, two superior honor and three meritorious honor awards.

2017 UCHS Class of 1979

### **Jerry Sugerman**

Conservationist

On August 8, 1978, Missourians came together to preserve the beauty of the Meramec River voting "no" to a federal dam. That victory, largely credited to Jerry Sugerman's vision and perseverance, had been set in motion 25 years earlier. As a research planner at Monsanto, he was temporarily a special assistant to U.S. Senator John C. Danforth (MO). The two worked to preserve the Meramec's pristine beauty and natural wildlife, a cause that Sugerman ultimately made his life's work. He authored the Meramec Heritage Riverway Plan to preserve agricultural, conservation and recreational areas and developed a land use model for the disposition of 27,000 acres of surplus federal lands bordering the Meramec.

2017 UCHS Class of 1959

### **Jake “Alex” Williams**

Television Production & Videographer

If you are a fan of sporting events, there is a chance you’ve seen the work of three-time Emmy-award winning videographer Alex Williams. From Michael Jordan to the Olympics, his images bring games to life. He has worked the Oscars, Emmys, Grammys and MTV Music Video Awards as well as hit shows including “Access Hollywood” and “The Nanny.” His most memorable were Michael Jackson’s talk with Oprah at Neverland Ranch in 1993 and President Barack Obama’s 2011 Christmas tree lighting ceremony. He also videotaped NASA’s Houston space shuttle landings from a helicopter.

2017 UCHS Class of 1975

### **Todd W. Williams**

Musician & Educator

Todd Williams is among the finest woodwind artists in today’s jazz music scene. He is a sought after saxophonist, clarinetist, flautist and clinician. He is an assistant professor of Music Education at Indiana Wesleyan University. He has performed at prestigious venues on six continents including The White House, Carnegie Hall and The Hollywood Bowl. Extensive recordings with Wynton Marsalis decorate his list of accomplishments, as well as guest appearances with artists including Harry Connick Jr.. He is a four-time recipient of ASCAP’s Plus Award for Composers. His flagship composition, “We Proclaim Him,” has been a featured internationally.

2017 UCHS Class of 1985

### **Andrew A. Woods**

Public Relations

Public relations executive Andy Woods believes that who he is, is a reflection of growing up in U. City and the diversity of people and experiences he enjoyed in his school years. He creating a sixth-grade student newspaper, served as sports editor for Hanley Junior High’s “Acorn” and UCHS’ “Tom Tom” (now “U-Times”) and enjoyed a three-sport standout career in athletics. At local Fleishman-Hillard PR firm, he rose to senior vice president/partner, before creating his own company in Los Angeles that provides communications for a major automobile maker, and authoring a book celebrating this client’s history.

2017 UCHS Class of 1975