



Honorary Degree

Nomination Form

1. Degree to be Awarded:

X Honorary Doctorate Honorary Baccalaureate Honorary Associate

2. Please state the name and address of your nominee for an Honorary Degree.

Ruby Phillips Duncan

3. Honorary degrees shall be awarded to persons who have made significant contributions to the improvement of the quality of academic programs and academic life at one of the NSHE's institutions. Persons currently holding public elected office are not eligible for the degree except in extraordinary circumstances.

What are your reasons for nominating this person? (Attach additional pages, if necessary.)

See attached

Marta Meana 7/30/18
Acting President Marta Meana Date

University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Institution

(B/R 3/03; Added 6/05)

**Addendum to
HONORARY DEGREE NOMINATION FORM**

NOMINEE: Ruby Duncan

Biography¹

Political activist Ruby Duncan arrived in Las Vegas in 1953 and quickly became aware of the need for services to assist women and children facing poverty. Through her advocacy and dedication, Ruby Duncan led the fight to establish the Operation Life Community Development Corporation in 1972. Operation Life was one of the nation's most effective anti-poverty programs in the 1970s and 1980s, and was the first federally funded community development corporation in America that was organized, controlled, and operated by low-income women. During her tenure, Operation Life initiated many programs designed to improve the lives of people in her community, such as a drug and alcohol abuse prevention program, a youth employment program, a low-income energy assistance program, a youth recreation program, and licensed, affordable daycare with an education component.

Ruby Duncan and her advocacy became so well known that in 1977 President Jimmy Carter invited her to the White House to discuss how to improve national jobs programs. Since that time and through her continued efforts to raise awareness of the needs of the disadvantaged in Clark County, Ms. Duncan and her supporters have established a medical clinic, a library, a daycare center for working mothers, and a job-training program in west Las Vegas. Due to health concerns, Ms. Duncan retired from her leadership position with Operation Life in 1990, however her advocacy for children and the underprivileged remains steadfast.

Ms. Duncan has received numerous local and national awards for her dedication to fair and equal treatment of women and children. In 1998, Ms. Duncan received a Distinguished Nevadan award presented by the Nevada System of Higher Education Board of Regents. She received the Margaret Chase Smith Award from the National Association of Secretaries of State in 2008. The award is presented to candidates who show "political courage and selfless action in the realm of public service."

¹ "Guide to the Ruby Duncan Papers on Operation Life." University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives., www.library.unlv.edu/speccol/finding-aids/MS-00367.pdf.