



# NEWS RELEASE

**Charles Petranek, Chad Hartmann  
to receive USI's top awards**

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**2 to graduate summa cum laude**

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The University of Southern Indiana's highest academic honors will be awarded this year to Dr. Charles F. Petranek, chair of the Sociology/Anthropology Department, selected by his colleagues to receive the National City Bank Distinguished Professor Award, and Chad J. Hartmann, a Presidential Scholar and mathematics major who was selected by the Student Academic Affairs Committee to receive the President's Medal, the highest award given a graduating senior.

Dr. Petranek was consistently described by students, colleagues, and students who have become colleagues as a teacher who truly enjoys his work, a man "with a warm heart, generous smile, and open office door...known by hundreds as a wise counselor and sympathetic friend." He was nominated by Dr. Donald E. Pitzer, chair of the History Department, and Dr. Melissa Vandeveer, associate professor of nursing.

Dr. Pitzer explained he has worked closely with Dr. Petranek in University, professional, and community endeavors, and noted Petranek "has pursued research projects into humane service for others through the United Way, Southwestern Mental Health Center, After-School Program for Children-at-Risk, Public Welfare Department, Day Care Centers, and more...he is an internationally-recognized pioneer in the use of simulated games to teach societal structure and behavior...he has made sacrificial personal efforts to involve his and others' students in the excitement of the broader world of scholarship..."

Vandeveer said Petranek served on her dissertation committee and provided countless hours of help with statistical analysis, a student support she found to be usual for him. In auditing one of his simulated games classes, she said he made the games a powerful learning experience. "I consider him a role model...with students. He is involved with every aspect of their learning environment and their personal welfare. His students become his friends and they grow together."

Dr. James R. Blevins, dean of the School of Liberal Arts, said Dr. Petranek's efforts as department chair prove him to be "a fine politician in the best sense of the term...Chuck shines as an excellent role model for students. He is a very strong family man...(whose) instincts and intellect have fused. What works for him in his own life has become thoughtful academic theory."

Dr. Petranek earned a B.A. in sociology, psychology, and philosophy from Aquinas  
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College, M.A. in sociology from Western Michigan University, and Ph.D. in sociology from Florida State University. He taught at Cleveland State University for three years, then joined the USI faculty in 1973 and has been chair of the Sociology/Anthropology Department since 1985.

He has directed evaluative research for numerous community organizations on such topics as priorities for the United Way, child/youth needs analyses including one on child abuse/neglect, client assessments of mental health facilities, and others. His publications in professional journals center on his work with the techniques of simulation and debriefing, but also reflect his involvement with hospice care on local, state, and national levels and the various community studies.

Hartmann, a 1991 graduate of Boonville High School where he was valedictorian of his graduating class, completed his studies at USI with a perfect 4.0 grade point average and will be one of two students who will graduate summa cum laude in 1995. He is the son of Barbara Hartmann, 1316 S. Bedford, Evansville.

His candidacy for the President's Medal was supported by teachers who found his efforts in and out of the classroom to be remarkable. Dr. David W. Kinsey, chair of the Mathematics Department, said Hartmann's 4.0 GPA "is only partially indicative of his capacity for doing mathematics...he ranks in the top five percent of all the majors I have had the opportunity of working with the past (23) years." Citing his maturation in college, his assistance as a paper grader, and his work with various student organizations, Dr. Kinsey noted Hartmann "has exemplary personal qualities...almost unlimited potential..."

Hartmann will graduate with a minor in physics. Dr. Thomas J. Pickett, assistant professor of physics, said Hartmann's "preparation and background make him a truly exceptional student..." The two are completing a research project which Dr. Pickett said is ahead of schedule, primarily due to young Hartmann's effort, working nights, weekends, and holidays to carry out intensive computer calculations. "The research should be, upon completion, of publishable quality," Dr. Pickett said, noting, "I think it will be some time before I have another research student like Chad."

Hartmann is a charter member of Mu Gamma Pi, the USI math club founded in 1991, and the Computer Science Club founded in 1994. He was 1992-93 president of the math club and is a board member for the computer club. He also is a member of the Student Education Association, the Kappa Delta Pi education honorary, the student group of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, and the Newman Club, which he has served as a board member. Christine Hoehn, director of Campus Ministry, citing Hartmann's work with the Newman Club and student housing groups, noted, "Chad is an excellent role model for young adults and the honest sharing of his gifts and talents benefits the entire University community."

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Dr. Kinsey said he and colleagues have urged Hartmann to go on to graduate school but "he is genuinely interested in beginning his career as a secondary teacher of mathematics and physics." To that end, Hartmann said he will do his student teaching next fall. He said he hopes to teach in the Evansville area.

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Hartmann and his former roommate, Brent Auberry, a political science and history major, will be the summa graduates for this year's Commencement, as both completed their college careers with perfect 4.0 GPAs.

Auberry also attended USI as a Presidential Scholar and was valedictorian at his graduation from Washington (Indiana) High School. He hopes to enter law school after his graduation from USI. He is the son of Joe and Toni Auberry of Washington.

Auberry has served as the student member of the USI Board of Trustees the past two years, appointed by Governor Evan Bayh. He is a member of the Student Alumni Association, a resident assistant in student housing, and a student ambassador. He was one of five charter members in Pi Sigma Alpha, a political science honorary formed on campus in Fall 1994.

He currently is an intern in the Indiana Senate, Indianapolis. During his college career, he has been employed in University Printing Services, has held an internship in Vanderburgh Circuit Court, working with the Probation Department, and also worked as a summer intern in the southern Indiana office of former Congressman Frank McCloskey.