March 13, 2018 — The University of Utah Board of Trustees announced today that Barbara Tanner and Raymond Uno will receive honorary doctorate degrees at the 2018 commencement ceremony, Thursday, May 3, 2018, at 6:30 p.m. in the Jon M. Huntsman Center. The award is the highest honor given by the university.

“These two individuals are incredible examples of dedicated service and leadership, and their unfailing commitment to the university sets them apart as pillars in the community,” said Joe Sargetakis, chair of the Board of Trustees’ honors committee. “We are proud to present them with this honor and recognize the significant contributions they have made throughout their careers.”

Barbara Lindquist Tanner is a community leader, humanitarian, human rights activist, philanthropist and elementary education alumna of the University of Utah. She was actively involved with the O.C. Tanner manufacturing company, where her late husband, Norman, propelled the company to worldwide success. As a firm believer in equal rights, she would inquire about whether everyone at the company had health care, if women were being promoted in a timely manner and if all were being treated fairly. In 2006, she and Norman established the Barbara L. and Norman C. Tanner Center for Nonviolent Human Rights Advocacy in the College of Social and Behavioral Science at the University of Utah. Its purpose is to encourage students, faculty, staff and local community members to seek a life of human rights advocacy and peacemaking through inspiration, education and participation. As part of that vision, it sponsors an annual lecture by a prominent speaker on human rights. Tanner also helped organize Utah Girls Village (now Utah Youth Village), a nonprofit program aimed at changing the lives of troubled children. A lover of music, she served on the Utah Symphony Board, was president of the Utah Symphony Guild and was the chairwoman of the Gina Bachauer International Piano Competition. She holds many honors and honorary degrees for her dedicated service throughout the community, including Woman of the Year from the Utah Arthritis Foundation and the People of Vision Award from the Friends of Sight. She has also served on many boards and committees, including the Utah State Women’s Legislative Council, the United Way of America, Utah’s Campaign for Music and on the Friends Board of KUED. Tanner and her late husband were married 77 years, and the two are the parents of four children: Clark, Susan, Deon and Deb.

Raymond Sonji Uno is a trailblazer, civil rights advocate and the first ethnic minority judge in Utah’s history. Uno spent his early life attending a racially segregated school, and in 1942, he was among 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry who were forced into U.S. government camps during World War II. It was there, surrounded by barbed wire fences and armed military guards, that he lost his father. During his high school years, he worked as a dishwasher, farm laborer and railroad tracklayer to earn money for school and living expenses. Upon graduation, and in spite of his incarceration during World War II, he chose to serve in the U.S. Army. After his service, he worked a variety of jobs to pay for school, and eventually earned numerous
degrees from the University of Utah, including a Juris Doctor in 1958. He had a successful legal career as a referee of the juvenile court, deputy Salt Lake County attorney, assistant attorney general of Utah and in private practice. He served for almost a quarter of a century as a judge to the Salt Lake City Court, 5th Circuit Court, Third District Court and as a senior Third District Court judge. Although he retired in 1990, he continued to serve for many years as a senior Third District Court judge. He has been honored with numerous awards for his community involvement and service. He has served on the boards of KUED and the College of Social and Behavioral Science. He remains associated with the U through the Alumni Association, Emeritus Alumni Board, Special Collections of the Marriott Library and S.J. Quinney College of Law’s Minority Law Caucus. At 87 years old, he continues to attend campus events and is an ardent supporter of the U’s football and basketball teams.

Each year, the university awards honorary degrees to individuals who have achieved distinction in academic pursuits, in the arts, in the professions, in business, in government, in civic affairs or in service to the university. The Honorary Degree Committee, which includes representatives from the faculty, student body and Board of Trustees, reviews nominations, and an advisory group of faculty, staff and administrators provide additional input. The finalists are presented to the university president, who chooses individuals that will bring honor to both the recipients and the university.