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## **Alexander Astin, UCLA Professor Emeritus of Education, Is Honored With the 2007 Paley Award for Service to Independent Higher Education**

Alexander “Sandy” Astin, founding director of the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA and professor emeritus of education at UCLA’s Graduate School of Education & Information Studies, has been honored with the 2007 Henry Paley Memorial Award by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU).

Since 1985, the Paley Award has recognized an individual who throughout his or her career has unflinchingly served the students and faculty of independent higher education and has set an example for all who seek to advance educational opportunity in the United States. The Paley Award is named for Henry Paley, president of the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities of New York from 1975 to 1984.

“I am very excited to receive such a prestigious honor,” said Astin, who was given the award Feb. 6 by NAICU President David L. Warren at a luncheon in Washington, D.C., during the group’s annual meeting.

One of the nation’s most prolific researchers in the field of higher education, Astin has authored 20 books and more than 300 other publications. Through much of his career, he has been most identified with the longitudinal study of college freshmen. For more than 40 years, Astin’s research, which he began at UCLA, has informed the nation’s understanding of the college experience and its outcomes.

“Professor Astin’s career has been an artful blend of exploration and exhortation in higher education. For decades, he has informed, inspired and cajoled the field’s leaders as higher education has evolved,” said Warren. “In recognition of his continuing influence on our service to those we teach, we are honored to present the 2007 Henry Paley Memorial Award to Sandy Astin.”

Astin was a moving force in attempts to truly understand and listen to students in the caldron of social unrest of the late 1960s. In the 1970s, he wrote about student-oriented change in higher education and the student dropout problem. He pressed for improved assessment and measurement of student outcomes in the 1980s and ’90s. In the new century, he has addressed the central role of colleges and universities in citizenship and civic engagement. Most recently, his research has

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explored values and spirituality, revealing a largely hidden thirst for meaning and purpose among students.

Although Astin retired in 1997 as director of UCLA's Cooperative Institutional Research Program, based in the Higher Education Research Institute, he continues as principal investigator on two major research projects at the institute. One is a long-term longitudinal study of the impact of the undergraduate service-learning experience on students' post-college life. The second, conducted with his wife, Helen, is a continuing national study of students' spiritual development.

In recognition of Astin's productivity, insight and influence, he has been elected to the National Academy of Education, has been named a fellow at Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University, has had conferred on him 11 honorary degrees, and has received awards for outstanding research and service from more than a dozen national associations and professional societies.

A survey by Change magazine in 1997 identified Astin as one of the nation's higher education agenda-setters, and a 1985 survey by Change cited him as the person most admired for creative, insightful thinking in the field of higher education. A 1990 Journal of Higher Education survey found him to be the most frequently cited author in the field.