**Citation: Lyda Hill**

Ms. Lyda Hill is an entrepreneur, philanthropist, and visionary whose life work has been transformational in community and global service and the support of research and science worldwide particularly relating to assisting and promoting women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields and the exploration sciences. She graduated from Hollins University in 1964 with a Bachelor of Art in Mathematics and she attended Stanford University between 1960-1961.

Her relationship with the University of the Witwatersrand extends over the last six years when she became involved at a critical moment in the discovery of *Homo naledi* at the Rising Star cave system. Over the last five years, her support of research into human origins here in South Africa has exceeded 20 million Rands.

Her early and rapid support of exploration related to the palaeosciences and her continued support has proven transformational to the field, allowing for the recovery of over 2000 individual hominid remains and the mapping and discovery of more than 200 fossil sites by the Hill Exploration project based at Wits. These include several new hominid sites and important archaeological sites. These fossils and sites are certain to provide generations of South African and global scientists with new and important discoveries related to human origins, discoveries that will undoubtedly profoundly affect the research output of Wits university over the next decades.

Ms. Hill is a vocal supporter of human origins research in the public sphere and actively supports the work of Wits, promoting our work at the University in her many public appearances and lectures. She was instrumental in arranging the University’s Origins exhibit at the Perot Museum in Dallas, Texas in cooperation with the National Geographic Society. Ms. Hill has made many other contributions to international society and science. She actively promotes women in science, developing dozens of scientific scholarships for female scientists and explorers, including international scholarships for South African scientists. She created the *IF Then She Can* programme in conjunction with the American Association for the Advancement for Science, which aims to support and inspire the next generation of girls to consider and pursue STEM subjects as careers.

Lyda is a member of the Giving Pledge. She has received awards and recognitions from over fifty US based and international organisations. She has served on the boards of more than twenty nonprofit organisations. It is therefore befitting that the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg bestows an Honoarary Degree on Ms Lyda Hill.