

## 2021 HONORAND

**Philip O. Geier**  
*Doctor of Humane Letters*



Your belief that all of us must build cross-cultural skills and attitudes of mutual respect—here in the United States and around the world—has inspired countless international learning experiences. Your commitment to fostering citizen diplomacy and international understanding through education serves as a model to us all. And your vision, which has helped to create a network of future leaders around the world, is legendary.

Your distinguished career spans university teaching and leadership positions at foundations, nonprofits, and educational institutions. The Davis United World College Scholars Program, of which you are executive director, is the world's largest privately funded international scholarship program. You co-founded this transformational program in 2000 with philanthropist Shelby M.C. Davis and, since then, more than 10,000 students from 150-plus countries have pursued their undergraduate degrees at nearly 100 colleges and universities across the country.

Trinity is proud to be among those institutions, and Davis UWC Scholars certainly have contributed to the college's efforts to be more globally minded and engaged. Here at Trinity, a total of 36 Davis UWC Scholars from 26 countries—including five Davis UWC Scholars in the Class of 2021—will have received Trinity College degrees. And the Davis UWC Scholar Program is growing here by leaps and bounds: during the 2021–22 academic year, Trinity anticipates 40 Davis UWC Scholars to be enrolled across all four class years.

In 2007, you created the Projects for Peace initiative, which you continue to run, also funded by Davis philanthropy. Projects for Peace enables college students to

design and implement projects anywhere around the globe, empowering them to help to shape a better, more peaceful world. Altogether, more than 1,500 students have been awarded summer grants of \$10,000 each to carry out their own projects. In the nearly 15 years since Projects for Peace began, Trinity has received funding for 19 student projects—two of which will take place this summer, one in Belgrade, Serbia, and another in northern Argentina. Thanks to Projects for Peace grants, Trinity students have—to offer a sampling—brought solar lighting to Nepal, promoted interfaith harmony in Pakistan, established a technology and study center at a jail in Bolivia, and developed a rainwater harvesting project in Trinidad and Tobago.

What ignited your spark in the first place and set you on the path to accomplishing such meaningful work? You earned your B.A. from Williams College and both your M.A. and Ph.D. from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University. Your passion for international educational exchange grew out of the year you spent teaching at the Sorbonne in Paris as a Fulbright lecturer in 1977–78, when you also were sponsored by the American Embassy to give talks on American culture in France.

Clearly, the impact of your unprecedented leadership in international education is felt not only at Trinity but also on campuses across the United States and around the globe. When members of Trinity’s faculty and staff talk about outstanding students—those who have made an especially lasting impression at Trinity throughout the years—Davis UWC Scholars and students involved in Projects for Peace are always included.

In recognition of your vision and profound influence, as well as your achievements as one of this country’s preeminent leaders in international education, I have the honor of presenting you, Philip O. Geier, for the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*.