IUB Alumnus Named New U.S. Ambassador to Russia

In early September, James Collins (M.A. '64), was sworn in as the new U.S. ambassador to Russia. Collins, who speaks Russian, German, and Turkish, assumes the ambassadorship after four years as ambassador-at-large to the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union. He has also served on the staff of the National Security Council and is a former director of the State Department's operations center.

Indiana University President Myles Brand praised the appointment by saying, "James Collins joins a distinguished group of IU graduates who play a leading role in world affairs."

At IU in the 1960s, Collins studied with some of the leading specialists in Russian affairs, including the late Distinguished Professor Robert F. Byrnes, founding director of the Russian and East European Institute (REEI), and Emeritus Professor Darrell Hammer, well-known scholar of Soviet and Russian politics.

"The institute has one of the largest and most diverse groups of specialists in Russian history in the country," said Russian historian Alexander Rabinowitch, friend and IU classmate of Collins and a former REEI director.

"Some faculty have purely academic backgrounds and some have government backgrounds. For example, Bob Byrnes had been a consultant to the CIA [and] John Thompson, who mentored both Jim and me, had been in the foreign service."

"He joins a distinguished group of IU graduates who play a leading role in world affairs."

- Myles Brand, IU President

IUPUI Launches New Center for Intercultural Communication

A new center has been created at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis to enable Indiana businesses, for whom trade is booming internationally, to become more aware of and better manage how they communicate with their partners abroad. A primary goal of IUPUI's new Center for Intercultural Communication will be to provide practical training for company officials to help them recognize the pitfalls in cross-linguistic and cross-cultural communications and negotiations.

Applied linguistics professor Ulla M. Connor, director of the new center, points out that the way in which business people communicate with one another has not kept pace with the rapid changes in communications that have occurred in the 1990s. "Technology has had a tremendous impact on international communications between businesses," she says. "Whether it's E-mail or the Internet or faxes, standards are changing." For example, she points out that most business writing textbooks still give the form letter as the primary ex-

please see IUPUI, p. 7

the institute at a time when McCarthy-era politics made it unpopular to study Russia." O'Meara pointed out that IU is doubly honored by Collins' appointment. "Not only is James Collins a graduate of IU, but so is his wife, Naomi Collins (PhD '70), who until recently served as executive director of NAFSA: Association of International Educators."

Collins' most recent visit to IU was in May 1996 when he delivered the keynote address at the 1996 Russian presidential elections at an REEI-sponsored forum in Indianapolis. "This forum was just one in a continuing series of informational meetings sponsored by REEI that bring many leading government and academic specialists to Indiana each year," said David Ransel, current REEI director.

In April, 1998, Collins will once again participate with IU when it hosts a national conference in Washington D.C. celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Title VI program. He will speak in the opening session about the value of international education and foreign language study, via a video conferencing hookup live from Moscow.