Outstanding International Alumni Receive Honorary Degrees at May Commencements

Amara Raksasataya
Doctor of Laws, IUPUI

An alumnus and devoted supporter of Indiana University, Amara Raksasataya has worked throughout his life to improve public administration and governance in his native Thailand. Toward that end, he has served as an academic, as advisor to the prime minister, as a senator, as chairman of the Public Opinion Committee, and as president of the Constitution Association for the People. The recent drafting of a new constitution for Thailand, an undertaking in which he played a leading role, is the capstone of his life's work.

In 1955, Amara earned a B.A. (with honors) in political science from Chulalongkorn University in Thailand and then came to IU for his graduate education. Earning his M.A. in 1957 and his Ph.D. in 1960, both in government, he returned to Thailand and began a career of teaching and public service. He was named a full professor at the National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA) in 1967, became dean of the School of Public Administration in 1969, and rector of NIDA in 1985. He is now Distinguished Professor Emeritus of NIDA.

An outstanding scholar, Amara has written more than 60 books and 240 articles about public administration, political science, and social development. Among English-language works authored or edited by him are *Rural Development Training in Asia* (1975), *Asian Civil Services: Development and Trends* (1980), and *Thailand: An Administrative Profile* (1991). He served as editor of the *Thai Journal of Public Administration* for six years and has been a member of the advisory board for SAGE Professional Papers in Administrative and Policy Studies since 1972. He also is a member of the Board of Management of the International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration and, since 1992, president of the Political Science Association of Thailand.

In addition to his teaching and scholarly work, Amara has actively shared his expertise with his country and the international community. He served as an expert in development administration to the United Nations Asian and Pacific Development Administration Center in Kuala Lumpur from 1974 to 1978; as a member of Thailand's Constitution Drafting Committee in 1974; three times as an advisor to the Prime Minister (1973–75, 1978–79, 1983–86); and as a member of the National Advisory Council for Labor Development (1983–87), the Administrative Reform Committee (1979–86), and the National Economic and Social Development Board (1984–89).

He frequently appears on television and in public lectures and his writings often are published in newspapers, helping to shape public opinion in Thailand on the topics of administrative reform and governance. “His work not only demonstrates his knowledge in his fields of interest, but also inspires and educates the public,” says Wichit Srisuphan, vice president of Chiang Mai University.

Amara has been a tireless supporter of IU. He was a key advisor in the formation of the university's Center on Southeast Asia at IUPUI. He has been an advisor to IU presidents John W. Ryan, Thomas Ehrlich, and Myles Brand, and has served two terms, beginning in 1986, as president of the IU Alumni Association of Thailand. In 1993, then-IU President Ehrlich awarded Amara the John W. Ryan Award for Excellence in International Endeavors at a special ceremony in Bangkok.

“It is largely because of Dr. Amara that Indiana University has a reinvigorated presence in Southeast Asia generally and in Thailand in particular,” says William Plater, IUPUI Executive Vice Chancellor and Dean of the Faculties. In view of his academic, governmental, and social work, and his role in drafting a new constitution, Plater calls Amara Raksasataya “a national hero in his native Thailand, and a man of uncommon distinction within the world community.”
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Justice Romero was accepted to the Indiana University School of Law in 1952 on a full fellowship, and graduated with her LL.M. degree in 1955. She often refers to Indiana University as "the family university" because her mother, Juliana C. Pineda, and her sister, Preciosa Irma Pineda Florentin, also earned graduate degrees there. "I first met Justice Romero when she was a student here in Bloomington in the early 1950s," said the late University Chancellor, Herman B. Wells, in a letter supporting her nomination for an honorary degree. "She was a diligent, intelligent, and insightful student, and went on to have an outstanding career in her home country."

Alfred C. Aman Jr., dean of the School of Law—Bloomington, characterizes Romero's ongoing relationship with IU this way: "The Honorable Romero, as an alumna, has brought honor and distinction to the IU School of Law. She is always interested to learn of the school's activities, and during her visit here

in 1994, eagerly immersed herself in faculty and student activities. Justice Romero holds IU fondly in her heart."

After graduation from IU, Romero returned to her homeland and began an academic career at the University of the Philippines—initially as a researcher in the Labor Education Center and later as a professor of law (a position she held for 22 years). A recognized expert in civil and labor law, she held the first Professorial Chair in Law and Development and later served as director of the University of the Philippines Law Center.

While working on the Civil Law Revision project at the Law Center, Romero was instrumental in drafting the Family Code of 1987. This was a seven-year endeavor, for which she became affectionately known as the "Mother of the Family Code." She drafted many other legislative works as well, including the Administrative Code of 1987, the Local Government Code, and the Consumer's Code.

With the assistance of colleagues at the university, Romero established the Asian Labor Education Center, which eventually became the degree-granting School of Labor and Industrial Relations. This program emphasizes the philosophy of free, responsible, and democratic trade unionism. A leader in labor law, she was the first labor arbitrator under Presidential Decree No. 21 and often has been called upon to mediate industrial disputes.

As a legal educator, Justice Romero created media programs to popularize the law. She was a columnist for the Manila Journal from 1986 to 1988 and wrote for the Philippine Star from 1989 to 1991. As a host on radio call-in shows, she answered listeners' questions in layman's terms, making the law more accessible to her people.


In 1986, she was chosen by then-President Corazon Aquino to be secretary-general of the Constitutional Commission and oversee the creation of a new Philippine constitution—modeled on the United States'—establishing a democracy and ending the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos. It was written in less than five months and ratified by the Filipino people that same year. From 1991 to 1999, Romero served as a justice of the Supreme Court of the Philippines.

Romero has vigorously fought to elevate the status of women and children through lecturing, publishing, and promoting legislation. She was chosen in 1975 to head the Philippine delegation to the International Women's Year Conference in Mexico. In 1995, Romero received the Gintong Ina Award (Golden Mother Award) and participated in the Regional Consultation on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. She presently serves in many women's legal associations.

Justice Romero retired from her position as Senior Associate Justice in July 1999. On that occasion, former Philippine Supreme Court Justice Andres R. Narvasa said, "Justice Romero will be remembered as among those who most strongly influenced the development of Philippine law in the twentieth century...her distinguished career bears eloquent witness to more than four decades of continuous effort to promote the richness of the legal system."

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Two IUB Latin American Historians Receive Grants

Jeffrey Gould, director of the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies and professor of history at IU Bloomington, has been awarded a Fulbright-Hays Faculty Research Abroad Fellowship to conduct research on his project, "Memories of a Massacre: Cultural Politics in El Salvador since 1932." Known as la Matanza, the 1932 massacre was one of the bloodiest repressions in modern Latin American history in which government troops executed thousands of primarily indigenous people in response to a peasant rebellion. Yet in commemorations of this event, local left-affiliated activists fail to include oral testimonies or narratives by still-surviving indigenous witnesses. It is a tragic irony of Central American nation-building, as embodied in the concept of mestizaje, that it has often driven surviv-
ing indigenous communities into a silent marginal existence. Gould has already begun to collect now-fragmented oral testimonies from these witnesses and to conduct archival research on this period. His work will contribute to the larger issue of collective memory and identity in Latin American historical research.

This July, Gould will chair the sessions on mestizaje at the Congress of Central American Historians, which will be held in San Salvador.

Peter Guardino, associate professor of history at IU Bloomington, was awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities grant this past December for his project, "From Children of the Village to Republican Citizens: Popular Political Culture in Oaxaca, 1750-1850." Starting in January 2001, he will use the grant to write a book about how the Enlightenment and republican liberalism changed popular political culture in the southern Mexican state of Oaxaca. The phrase "popular political culture" refers to the way that poor peasants and urban people understood politics and acted politically during that period. The book will show how the transformation in the cultural underpinnings of politics extended beyond urban, literate elites. The urban poor and rural indigenous peasants understood and adapted to this shift in governing paradigms and used it to partially remake their social worlds.

The basic research for this project was completed over the past several years, supported by a grant from the Social Science Research Council, summer fellowships, and a sabbatical leave.

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Following the commencement at IUPUI, Amara Raksasataya and his wife, Somkit Raksasataya, came to Bloomington especially to present IUB Chancellor Kenneth Gros Louis an inscribed plaque in memory of Chancellor Herman B Wells' role in the development of higher education in Thailand. The plaque will be on permanent display in Wells' study in Owen Hall.

Justice Flerida Ruth Romero, her son, Charlton Jules Romero, who is a lawyer in the Philippines, and OIP Dean Patrick O'Meara chat at a reception in honor of IU Bloomington's international students who graduated in May.