

By: Representative B. Overbey

HOUSE RESOLUTION

COMMENDING DR. RICK NIECE AND SHERÉE NIECE FOR THEIR SERVICE TO THE UNIVERSITY OF THE OZARKS AND CONGRATULATING THEM FOR THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENTS WHILE SERVING AS PRESIDENT AND FIRST LADY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE OZARKS.

Subtitle

COMMENDING DR. RICK NIECE AND SHERÉE NIECE FOR THEIR SERVICE TO THE UNIVERSITY OF THE OZARKS.

WHEREAS, Dr. Rick Niece has served as the University of the Ozarks' president since April 26, 1997; and

WHEREAS, Sherée Niece has worked side by side with her husband as First Lady of the University of the Ozarks since his tenure as President began; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Niece will retire from his presidency of the University of the Ozarks in the summer of 2013; and

WHEREAS, under Dr. Niece's leadership, student enrollment has increased, the endowment has grown by more than two hundred percent (200%), and the number of faculty has increased from twenty-eight (28) to forty-eight (48); and

WHEREAS, during Dr. Niece's tenure as president, the University of the Ozarks had added several new facilities, including four (4) apartment-style



residence halls, the Walker Hall teacher education and communications center, the Rogers Conference Center and the Mabee Student Fitness Center; and

WHEREAS, through Dr. and Mrs. Niece's relentless and tireless efforts, the University of the Ozarks has had unparalleled fund-raising success, raising nearly one hundred forty million dollars (\$140,000,000) during the past fifteen (15) years; and

WHEREAS, due in large part to Dr. Niece's leadership, the University of the Ozarks has consistently been rated among the top institutions of higher education in the region by publications and surveys such as U.S. News & World Report, National Survey of Student Engagement, and The Chronicle of Higher Education's Great Colleges to Work For; and

WHEREAS, the University of the Ozarks was listed as the "top-rated best value in the South" by U.S. News & World Report's 2012 edition of "America's Best Colleges"; and

WHEREAS, the loan debt for graduates of the University of the Ozarks is below the national average as Dr. Niece has striven to keep the cost of a college education affordable; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Niece has been described as "an inspirational leader whose optimism, enthusiasm for education, and unwavering support of students daily conveys the Ozarks' mission", that mission being to provide the best education possible for each student every time; and

WHEREAS, having no children of their own, Dr. and Mrs. Niece consider the students of the University of the Ozarks their "kids", hosting numerous activities for the students and considering their best times to have been during Freshmen Dinners, Senior Dinners, Super Bowl Parties, Pumpkin Carving Parties, Movie Nights, and many more student-included activities; and

WHEREAS, the Nieces' legacy of interaction with, and support of, the students of the University of the Ozarks has enriched the lives of the students and influenced students to better prepare for the future; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Niece's encouragement of student, faculty, and staff participation on committees of the Board of Directors has led to mentoring relationships and friendships, enriching the lives of students, faculty, staff, and board members alike; and

WHEREAS, the students of the University of the Ozarks, through Dr. and Mrs. Niece's modeling of hospitality and servant leadership, have learned to strive to meet and exceed the high standards set by Dr. and Mrs. Niece; and

WHEREAS, Sherée Niece's work with the University of the Ozarks Women in such projects as christmas angels, breast cancer awareness, the birthday calendar, and scholarship programs has helped the university to have a tremendous impact not only on campus, but throughout the community,

NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE EIGHTY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

THAT the House of Representatives commends Dr. Rick and Sherée Niece for their unselfish and exemplary service to the University of the Ozarks and congratulates them on their many accomplishments while serving as President and First Lady of the University of the Ozarks.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon adoption of this resolution, a copy shall be provided to Dr. Rick and Sherée Niece by the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives.