

NEBRASKA HALL OF FAME COMMISSION SELECTS DR. ALVIN JOHNSON AS NEW INDUCTEE at 11-15-12 meeting at NEBRASKA STATE CAPITOL, LINCOLN

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The Nebraska Hall of Fame Commission has selected Alvin Saunders Johnson as its newest inductee. Dr. Johnson, born near Homer, Nebraska, in 1874, gained national and international recognition as economist, educator, humanitarian, social activist, writer, and editor.

Johnson grew up embracing the values and work ethic of farm life. At age eighteen, he enrolled at the University of Nebraska, receiving both his bachelor's and master's degrees in the classics. He received a Ph.D. in economics at Columbia University in 1902. His remarkable career was marked by diversity. He served as an economic theorist, historian, and professor at Columbia, Nebraska, Texas, Chicago, Stanford and Cornell. . He co-founded the New School for Social Research in New York City and led it for twenty-two years, pioneering a new model for adult education in America. He founded the University in Exile as a haven for refugee European intellectuals fleeing Nazi persecution within the New School. Johnson edited the initial "Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences," was a leader in framing the nation's first non-discrimination legislation, and was an editor of "The New Republic." The prolific writer authored two novels, three collections of short stories, and an autobiography in addition to his influential academic writing. Johnson received honorary doctorates from Nebraska, Brandeis, Yeshiva, Brussels, Algiers, Helderberg, The New School for Social Research and Hebrew Union College.

Throughout his career, Johnson often credited the values instilled in him while living and studying in Nebraska. His immigrant father was a strong believer in racial and social equality, and his mother, also born in Denmark, was a strong feminist with a great appreciation of classical literature. These traits were passed on to Johnson from early childhood and became the foundation of his intellectual fabric, work ethic, and his extraordinary influence on American cultural and intellectual life.

Proponents of Johnson's nomination at commission public hearings in November noted each of his career highlights could be independently judged as exemplary; collectively they reflect a remarkable individual of whom Nebraskans can be justifiably proud.

Busts of Hall of Fame members are placed in the Nebraska State Capitol. Details on fundraising for commission of a bust will be forthcoming. An induction ceremony will be planned for May of 2014.

[About the Nebraska Hall of Fame Commission:](#)

The current Hall of Fame was established in 1961 to officially recognize those who have made significant contributions to Nebraska and the nation. Individuals must be deceased thirty-five years to be considered. The Hall of Fame Commission, with members appointed by the governor, is the official body responsible for the evaluation of candidates and the bestowal of this honor. Current commissioners include Harold Andersen, Omaha; Dr. Ron Hull, Lincoln; Dr. Ron Naugle, Lincoln; Dr. Sara Crook, Peru; Dr. Dennis Mihelich, Omaha; and JoAnn Smith of Gering. Michael J. Smith, Lincoln, serves as secretary of the commission.

For a full list of all members of the Nebraska Hall of Fame, visit www.nebraskahistory.org/admin/hall_of_fame/bluebook.pdf