



News Release

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Century College Announces Women of Distinction Awards for 2008

Century College has selected four Women of Distinction award recipients for 2008. They are Lois Quam, managing director of alternative investments for Piper Jaffray; Ann Reed, singer, songwriter and guitarist; Lee Roper-Batker, president and CEO of the Women's Foundation of Minnesota, and Ka Vang, writer, poet and diversity programs director for Minnesota State Colleges and Universities.

Quam has assumed a newly created senior post at Piper Jaffray, where she is responsible for the development of new business opportunities in the emerging green economy and health care sectors. She is the former Chief Executive Officer of UnitedHealth Group's Ovation division, which provides services to older adults. In addition, Quam chaired the Minnesota Health Care Access Commission, which made the case for new legislation that brought health insurance to thousands of Minnesotans.

Singer and song writer Ann Reed has released 15 albums and given countless concerts over the past 25 years. She is also a frequent guest on Minnesota Public Radio's Morning Show, where she occasionally fills in as co-host. She donates about 25 percent of her time to support nonprofit groups that primarily benefit women and children.

Lee Roper-Batker, president and CEO of the Women's Foundation of Minnesota, has over 25 years of experience in the nonprofit sector. She is the former president and owner of a strategic fundraising and communications business that served nonprofit clients throughout the country. She also served as the executive director for ProChoice Resources and MN NARAL, focusing on low-income women's access to reproductive health care.

Writer and poet Ka Vang, diversity program director for the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, is a recipient of the Archibald Bush Artist Fellowship, performs frequently across the country and is actively involved in Asian American community issues. A former Pioneer Press reporter, Vang writes a column for the Minnesota Women's Press, and her work frequently appears in the Paj Ntaub Voice, one of the first Hmong literary journals in the world.

Each recipient is being honored not only for her professional accomplishments, but also for her work in improving the lives and increasing opportunities for women or girls. Century College began its Women of Distinction awards in 2005 to highlight the accomplishments of women in our society and also celebrate that more women gain access to higher education through community/technical colleges than through any other type of post-secondary institution.

Century's fourth annual awards ceremony and reception will be held Thursday, Dec. 11, at Dellwood Hills Golf Club, 29 Highway 96, Dellwood. Cathy Wurzer of Minnesota Public Radio will be the guest host and Kantorei, a Twin Cities-based, *a capella* choral group, will perform.

The Women of Distinction awards are sponsored by Century College and the Century College Women and Gender Studies Department. If members of the public would like to attend this free event, please call [Sue Klecker](#) at 651-773-1792.