

To: Washington State University Board of Regents

From: Rafael Pruneda
Chair, Regents' Distinguished Alumni Award Committee

Re: Recommendations for 2023 RDAA Recipient

Date: January 8, 2023

Members of the Regents' Distinguished Alumni Award Committee met recently to review nominations for the Regents' Distinguished Alumni Award (RDAA). Membership of the RDAA committee for 2023-2024 includes a representative from the Faculty Senate, WSU Foundation Advocate, WSUAA Board of Director representative, Past President of the WSU Alumni Association, student representative, the Executive Director of the Alumni Association, and the Vice President of Advancement. The primary functions of this committee are to accept and screen nominations, and to recommend nominees to you for consideration and possible recommendation to the Board of Regents.

With the approval of President Schulz, the committee respectfully recommends one candidate for your consideration.

Candidate J

- First-generation college student
- Graduated summa cum laude in 2000 in Business Administration
- Earn her MBA from Columbia Business School in 2004
- Worked as an anchor and field reporter at KNDU (Tri-Cities) and KPTV (Portland, OR)
- She started testing and creating cosmetics in collaboration with plastic surgeons and dermatologists after struggling with makeup products due to rosacea, hyperpigmentation, and sparse eyebrows. She and her husband launched her cosmetics line, Innovation Technology (IT) Cosmetics, in 2008; she served as CEO.
- In 2010, she met a QVC buyer at a trade show in New York who tried her product and promised a meeting. She secured a 10-minute segment during which she wiped off her own makeup and then reapplied it to illustrate the effectiveness of IT Cosmetics concealers. All products sold out by the end of the segment. IT Cosmetics ultimately became the largest beauty brand on QVC's network.
- IT Cosmetics was acquired by L'Oréal for \$1.2 billion in 2016. J remained with the company upon the acquisition and was the first ever female CEO of a L'Oréal brand.
- August 2019, J announced on Instagram that she would be leaving L'Oréal and turned her attention to speaking engagements, investing in other businesses, and promoting her own books.

- Author of *Believe It: How to Go from Underestimated to Unstoppable* (2021) and *Worthy: How to Believe You Are Enough and Transform Your Life* (to be released in 2024).
- J as included on the Forbes' list of "America's Richest Self-Made Women" since 2017.

On behalf of the RDAA committee, I am pleased to recommend this exceptional nominee for the Regents' Distinguished Alumni Award. For your reference, please find attached information regarding the nomination and award criteria.

Lastly, the committee discussed the chance that, in any given year, the pool of candidates would not accurately reflect the ideals pursued for the RDAA, the RDAA Committee recommends that the award not be given out that year in agreement with the Board of Regents.

Should you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to ask Mariah Maki or myself.

Attachments

cc: Tracy Jordahl
Mariah Maki