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## News from the Swenson Center

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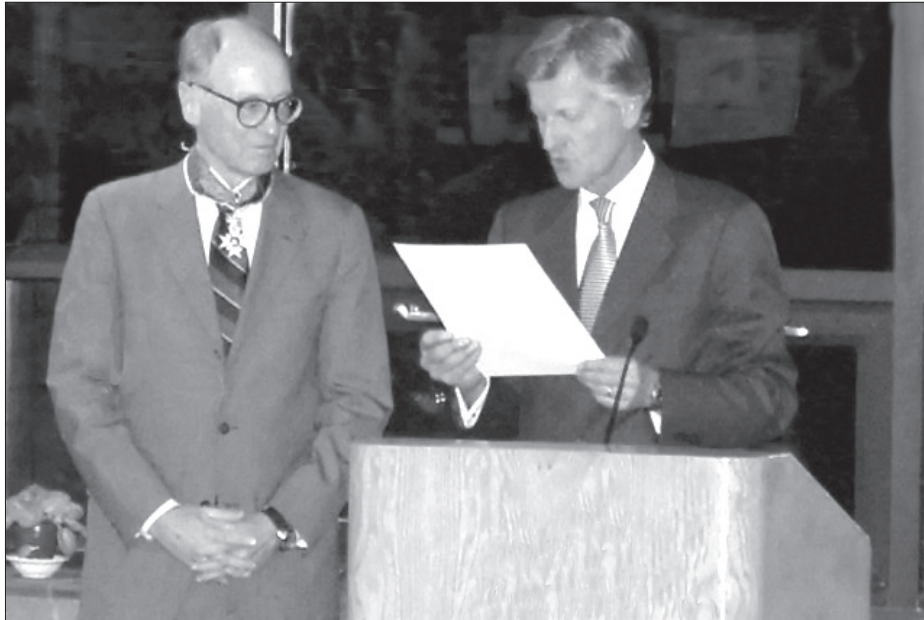
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# News from the Swenson Center

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## A new knight at Augustana



On Monday, March 10, 2008, Sweden's Ambassador to the U.S., *Jonas Hafström* visited Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois, to present the Order of the Polar Star (*Nordstjärneorden*) to Dr. *Thomas Tredway*, president emeritus of Augustana College, in recognition of the many ways he has nurtured Augustana's ties to Sweden. Augustana College has one of the oldest Departments of Scandinavian Studies in the United States with international study opportu-

nities in Sweden, has received many students from Sweden, and is the home of the Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center.

Ambassador Hafström, his wife, Eva Hafström, and Swedish Consul General for Chicago Kerstin Lane were all guests at a dinner held in Tredway's honor. At the dinner, Augustana's current president, Steve Bahls, noted that "Thanks to Dr. Tredway, our ties to Sweden remain strong today" and Ambassador Haf-

ström noted Augustana's upcoming sesquicentennial in 2010, and offered to help the college arrange for a visit by Swedish royalty during the anniversary year.

The medal Ambassador Hafström presented to Dr. Tredway on behalf of the Swedish monarch consists of a white Maltese cross over a gold background. The center of the cross is a blue shield with an inscription referring to the North Star: *Nescit Occasum* ("it knows no decline").

*Dag Blanck*

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**Wikipedia:** The Order of the Polar Star (*Nordstjärneorden*) is a Swedish order of chivalry created by King Frederick I of Sweden on 23 February 1748, together with the Order of the Sword and the Order of the Seraphim.

The Order of the Polar Star was until 1975 intended as a reward for Swedish and foreign "civic merits, for devotion to duty, for science, literary, learned and useful works and for new and beneficial institutions."

Its motto is, and can still be seen on the blue enameled centre of the badge, *Nescit Occasum*. This is Latin and means "it knows no decline." This is to prove that Sweden is as constant as a never-setting star. The Order's color is black. This was chosen so that when wearing the black sash, the white, blue and golden cross would stand out and shine as the light of enlightenment from the black surface. Women and clergymen are not called knight or commander but simply Member (*Ledamot*).

After the reorganization of the orders in 1975 the order is only awarded to foreigners and members of the royal family. It is often awarded to foreign office holders (such as prime and senior ministers) during Swedish state visits.