

PHILLIP LEROY CLAY

Phillip Clay is chancellor of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). He is one of the Institute's two most senior academic officers, with responsibility for graduate and undergraduate education, student life, student services, and research policy. He is also responsible for strategic planning and oversight of the Institute's large-scale partnerships, both industrial and international.

Phillip Clay earned his Carolina bachelor's degree with honors in history and urban studies in 1968. Like Hinton James, the University's first undergraduate student, Phil Clay is a native of Wilmington. Like James, he is also among the pioneers who have opened the doors of higher education to all of North Carolina's sons and daughters. During his undergraduate years, Clay founded and directed Carolina Talent Search, a student organization whose mission it was to identify prospective students and encourage them to apply to Carolina, in recognition that "equal opportunity" is not equal until everyone has equal access to, and knowledge of, the opportunity. Clay was also active in the Toronto Exchange Commission and the Carolina Forum and was inducted into the Order of the Grail.

Immediately after graduating from Carolina, Phillip Clay enrolled in MIT where he earned his Ph.D. degree in city planning in 1975. He joined the MIT faculty in 1974. He was named head of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning in 1992, and served as associate provost from 1994 until being named chancellor in 2001. From 1980 to 1984 he served as the assistant director of the Joint Center of Urban Studies of and Harvard. Professor Clay is widely known for his work in U.S. housing policy and

community-based development. His publications include two books, *Neighborhood Renewal: Middleclass Resettlement and Incumbent Upgrading in American Neighborhoods* and *Neighborhood Politics and Planning*.

When Professor Clay was appointed chancellor, he was asked “What’s special about MIT people?” He replied in part “Well, there are some other schools that are also very, very good. I certainly wouldn’t say that this is the only place you could study and have a good education.” Obviously Phil Clay, Class of 1968, was silently humming “Carolina in My Mind” when he said that.

Professor Cassandra Clay, Phil’s wife, is a member of the faculty of Boston University. They were married in 1971 at the Martin Street Baptist Church in Raleigh, Cassandra’s home town. Their daughter, Elizabeth, is a recent graduate of Columbia University.

Phillip Leroy Clay stands before you today as an exemplar of the very best that two great American universities can produce. Carolina is proud to claim him as our own and to bestow upon him this Distinguished Alumnus Award.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN LONG IV

Like his father and grandfather before him, Ben Long always knew that he wanted to be an artist, but the image of the ragged artist starving in a garret, immortalized by Puccini's *La Bohème*, did not appeal—at least not to his father—and so young Ben enrolled in Carolina. Life in the ivied halls and leafy shade of this old campus did appeal, but something was missing. Six months before Ben was due to graduate, his friend Reynolds Price put to him this question: what do you really want to do? Ben had known the answer for a long time, but Reynolds' challenge emboldened him to withdraw from Carolina and enroll in the Art Students League in New York City. That decision has led to international recognition for his unique work in reviving the centuries-old art of fresco, the preferred medium of Raphael, DaVinci, and Michelangelo.

After a tour of duty in Vietnam as a member of the United States Marine Corps, Ben Long went to Florence, Italy, where he sought out Maestro Pietro Annigoni, one of the few practitioners of the art of fresco. He studied with Annigoni for eight years, beginning in 1971. In the midst of his studies, Long returned to his native North Carolina determined to revive fresco painting on these shores. He approached several large churches with a most unusual offer: I'll design and execute a fresco for you for the cost of materials only. There were no takers. Then one day he happened to meet the vicar of two tiny Episcopal churches in Ashe County—combined membership of 30. "Would you be interested in some frescoes," he said. "We would be delighted," said the vicar. "What's a fresco?" Today, Ben Long's frescoes in St. Mary's of the Hills, Beaver Creek, and Holy Trinity, Glendale

Springs, have been visited by hundreds of thousands. The Ashe County frescoes have been joined by others in the Bank of America Corporate Center, the Basilica of the Monte Cassino Abbey, and the Monastery of St. Francis of Assisi, to mention but a few. A splendid work for St. Peter's Catholic Church in Charlotte lies in ruins for reasons unknown.

Although Ben Long is known principally for his frescoes, he is also a talented portrait artist working in oils. He painted the official portrait of Governor James B. Hunt that hangs in the North Carolina Governor's Mansion, and has exhibited his work at the Royal Portrait Society in London. Long has also exhibited at such varied venues as the Fremantle Collection in Florence, the Getty Collection in San Francisco, the Thane of Cawdor Collection in Scotland, and the Mint Museum of Art Collection in Charlotte.

Ben Long's North Carolina frescoes have had a profound effect on the thousands who have sought them out. One admirer, Mary Beth Ellis of *Our State* magazine, hails his powerful ability to illustrate the human experience as depicting "the landscape of the soul." The evocative power of his work is amply illustrated by a controversy that developed over a recent fresco that he painted as a gift to his hometown, Statesville. It depicts the Greek goddess Hecate who, in classical art and literature, is a symbol of new beginnings. Her image was often placed at crossroads for that reason. "Witchcraft," cried the ignorant. The mayor, Ben's staunch supporter, called a public hearing. Ben did not go. He was busy painting.

For outstanding accomplishments in the field of art, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is pleased to confer on Benjamin Franklin Long IV this Distinguished Alumnus Award.