

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Regents Communication

Approved by the Regents

June 16, 2006

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement

Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir

Jeffrey R. Parsons, Ph.D., professor of anthropology and curator of Latin American archaeology in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, will retire from active faculty status on June 30, 2006.

Professor Parsons received his B.S. degree (1961) from The Pennsylvania State University and his M.A. (1963) and Ph.D. degrees (1966) from the University of Michigan. He joined the University of Michigan faculty in 1966 as assistant professor of anthropology and curator of Latin American archaeology in the Museum of Anthropology and was promoted to associate professor in 1971 and professor in 1976. He served as director of the Museum of Anthropology from 1983-1986 and was academic program director of Latin America and Caribbean Studies, in the International Institute from 2002-04.

Professor Parsons is known for his innovations in regional studies of the early New World civilizations. He began his research in the Valley of Mexico in 1963, perfecting the technique of archaeological surface survey now used in many areas of the world. Working closely with Mexican colleagues, his teams walked over almost every square kilometer of the Valley of Mexico not sealed by asphalt and concrete. The results, detailed reports on the settlement sites of every period from 1200 BC to AD 1520 – more than 2500 hamlet, village, and town sites – were published in a series of monographs by the Museum of Anthropology. Articles evaluating broader theoretical issues, such as the roles of population growth, irrigation, and conflict have appeared in major journals. He and colleagues have also conducted studies of the surviving traditional economic pursuits in the valley, such as salt-making, agave processing, and the harvesting of insects and algae. In 1975 Professor Parsons introduced the regional archaeological approach to Peru, undertaking a major survey in the Junin area of the Central Andes, which has recently been published as major monograph. In 1998 he received the highest honor given to New World archaeologists, the Alfred V. Kidder Award of the American Anthropological Association. In 2002, in recognition of his outstanding reputation as a teacher, counselor, and mentor of undergraduate and graduate students, Professor Parsons received the LS&A Distinguished Faculty Achievement Award.

The Regents now salute this distinguished scholar by naming **Jeffrey R. Parsons professor emeritus of anthropology and curator emeritus of Latin American archaeology**.

Requested by:



Sally J. Churchill

Vice President and Secretary of the University

June 2006