



UNIVERSITY OF SAINT JOSEPH

CONNECTICUT

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U.S. Department of State Ambassador to Speak at University of Saint Joseph on March 20, 2013

WEST HARTFORD, CONN. – As part of Women’s History Month, the University of Saint Joseph (USJ) will present a lecture **featuring U.S. Department of State Ambassador-at-Large for Religious Freedom Suzan Johnson Cook on Wednesday, March 20, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the Crystal Room of Mercy Hall, located on USJ’s West Hartford campus at 1678 Asylum Avenue.** Admission to the event is **free of charge and open to the public.** For more information, contact Jennifer Cote, Ph.D., assistant professor of History, at 860.231.5281 or jennifercote@usj.edu.

Presenting on the topic of “Women and Public Service,” Johnson Cook will discuss her role and responsibilities as well as the opportunities available for women in public service.

Appointed by President Barack Obama as Ambassador-at-Large for Religious Freedom, Johnson Cook was confirmed by the U.S. Senate in 2011 – the first African American and the first woman to hold this position. She is the principal advisor to both the President of the United States and Secretary of State for religious freedom globally. Johnson Cook was previously appointed by President Bill Clinton in 1997 to serve on his National Initiative on Race as its only faith advisor. In 1993, she was a White House Fellow on the Domestic Policy Council, advising President Clinton on a range of issues including homelessness, violence, and community empowerment.

In addition to her Presidential appointments, Johnson Cook has an extensive background of service as senior pastor to three New York City congregations; professor at New York Theological Seminary (1988 - 1996); and associate dean and professor at Harvard Divinity School (1990 - 1992). Johnson Cook also served as chaplain to the New York City Police Department for 21 years – the only woman to serve in that role.

The recipient of several prestigious awards including the Woman of Conscience Award, the Martin Luther King Jr. Award, the Visionary Leader’s Award, and the Judith Hollister Peace Award, she has also authored 10 books. Johnson Cook earned her B.S. from Emerson College in 1976 and an M.A. from Columbia University Teachers College in 1978. She completed a Master

of Divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary (New York, N.Y.) and a Doctor of Ministry from United Theological Seminary (Dayton, Ohio) in 1983 and 1990, respectively.

This lecture is sponsored by USJ's Diversity Committee, department of International Studies, and department of Religious Studies.

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The University of Saint Joseph (USJ) offers a wide range of graduate, undergraduate, and certificate programs that combine a professional and liberal arts education with a focus on service. Coeducational graduate master's and doctoral degree programs are taught on the University's two campuses in West Hartford and Hartford, Connecticut; at off-campus locations throughout the state; and online. Undergraduate programs for women and for coeducational adult students take place on our beautiful suburban campus and include more than 22 majors and six pre-professional programs, each of which provides personal attention in a caring environment. Founded in 1932 by the Sisters of Mercy, the University of Saint Joseph welcomes students from diverse backgrounds and religious traditions. To learn more, view our website at www.usj.edu.

OFFICE OF MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

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