

## JAMES EARL JONES

James Earl Jones is one of the premier actors of the nation, notable not merely for fine technique and style, but for his ability to electrify an audience through the controlled intensity of his performances. Born in Mississippi, he grew up in Michigan and took a degree in drama at the University of Michigan. He earned a diploma at the American Theatre Wing in 1957 and began his professional career.

James Earl Jones had to struggle against odds: his early years were stressful, and in grade school he developed a severe stammer. In high school, however, he took work in debate and oratory, working resolutely to overcome his speech problem.

A remarkable versatility has marked his distinguished career. He has mastered a startlingly wide range of roles, playing Shakespeare as well as avant garde productions; he has appeared in both secondary and starring roles Off-Broadway and on Broadway, in movies, and on television. In some roles he has been able to speak powerfully to important social issues; it is thus somewhat ironic that he may be most widely known as the voice of Darth Vader in Star Wars and its sequels.

Numerous awards have come to Mr. Jones, including a Tony award for Best Actor in The Great White Hope, a Grammy award, and the Medal for Spoken Language of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. The University delights to honor this superb artist.