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### **AK-SAR-BEN HONORS CONLEY FAMILY WITH QUEEN HONOR**

*October 10, 2009 – Omaha, Nebr.* The Conley family was honored for their civic leadership and community service as Allison Grace Conley was crowned as the 113<sup>th</sup> Queen of Ak-Sar-Ben. On October 10, 2009 during the annual Ak-Sar-Ben Coronation and Ball nearly 2,500 attendees witnessed the crowning and the formal introduction of the Court of Quivira which included honorees from more than 200 Nebraska and western Iowa families.

The new Queen attends The University of North Carolina at Greensboro and will complete a five-year professional program in Interior Architecture with a French minor in December of 2009. Allison is an alumni member of Alpha Delta Pi Sorority and was inducted into the Alpha Lambda Delta Honors Fraternity in 2006, the Order of the Omega in 2007, the prestigious Kappa Omicron Nu Honors Society in 2007, and Golden Key International Honour Society in 2009. The Queen has been on the Chancellor's and Deans list the past four years. She has demonstrated great leadership as a Board representative and Secretary to the UNCG International Interior Design Association (IIDA) Board. Allison Conley is the daughter of John H. Conley and Deborah Marks Conley of Omaha.

Queen Allison graduated from Westside High School in 2005, where she was a member of the National Honors Society, Student Advisory Board, Quill & Scroll, French Club, and Key Club. Golfing for the Warriors was a major part of her four-year high school career where she served as team captain as a senior. As the first editor-in-chief of Xanadu, Westside's literary art magazine, Conley helped establish its first edition in 2005.

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Her volunteer resume includes raising money for the Ronald McDonald House in Winston-Salem, NC, teaching English to African refugees through African Services and serving as a volunteer for a project called My Sister's House, which involves the construction of a 4,500 sq ft, six bedroom home for young teenage mothers.

During the spring semester of 2007 she studied abroad at l'Ecole Speciale d'Architecture in Paris, France and completed a summer internship at the Château de Chantilly, France. The internship was sponsored by French Heritage Society, an organization which fosters the benevolent exchange of French and Americans to work on historical preservation in the two countries. While in Paris, she was awarded a Middlebury Sustainable Study Abroad Grant and authored a bilingual book entitled: *How Much of an Emphasis Does France Put on Sustainability in Modern Architecture?*

The Queen's father, John H. Conley, is President and CEO of Conley Investment Counsel which provides financial consulting and portfolio management for individuals, corporations, and not-for-profit entities around the United States. Born in Omaha, Nebraska he graduated from Hoover High School Des Moines, Iowa in 1971. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration and Economics from Nebraska Wesleyan University in 1975 and attended the Securities Institute at the Wharton School of Business. He earned his Charter Financial Analyst (CFA) designation in 1980.

His professional career began before graduation where he successfully served as Assistant Vice President of Research for Lincoln-based First MidAmerica, Inc.. In 1982, he relocated to Omaha and joined Chiles, Heider & Company, Inc., as Vice President and Director of Research. When the company was sold he joined Mutual of Omaha Fund Management Company as Director of Institutional Sales and Services and later he became Vice President and Director of Marketing for Mutual's Kirkpatrick, Pettis, Smith, Polian brokerage division. He founded Conley Investment Counsel in 1986. His professional affiliations include the Chartered Financial Analyst Institute and CFA Society of Nebraska where he serves as President-Elect and on the Board of Directors.

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Conley's commitment to community has included serving as a Trustee and President of Brownell Talbot School, a member of the University of Nebraska President's Advisory Committee, Bellevue University Entrepreneurial Advisory Committee, Offutt Advisory Committee, and United Way Investment and Endowment Development Committee. He has served in chairmanship work with the Junior Achievement of the Midlands, American Cancer Society, Midwest Geriatrics and Florence Home. Over the years he has had a major commitment to the National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ). He has served on the Midlands Region Board of Directors and later a ten year commitment to the National Board where he served as National Treasurer for six years.

His Ak-Sar-Ben involvement includes serving as President of His Majesty's Council, Chairman of the Ike Friedman Awards Committee, Chairman of the Scholarship Committee, as well as participating on the Floor Committee, Women's Ball Investment Committee and River City Roundup Board including a stint of Chairman for three years. He is a TeamMates mentor.

The Queen's mother, Deborah Marks Conley, was born in Greenville, South Carolina and grew up in a military family. In 1976 she graduated with a B.S.N. degree in nursing from Central Missouri State University and in 1994 she received her M.S.N. in Gerontological Nursing from the University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Nursing in Omaha. She has a lengthy curriculum vitae and storied history in gerontological nursing working in various roles including administrator, practitioner, faculty member, author and clinical nurse researcher.

Presently she is a Gerontological Clinical Nurse Specialist-Advanced Practice Registered Nurse at Nebraska Methodist Hospital. She currently holds a joint appointment as an Assistant Professor in the Nebraska Methodist College Department of Nursing.

The mother of the Queen, Deborah, has been a frequent guest lecturer and presenter locally, nationally and internationally on gerontological nursing. Her

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professional career volunteer involvement includes serving on the Nebraska Nurses Association Board of Directors-District II, Vice President of the National Gerontological Nursing Association, Co-Chair of the Gerontological Nursing section of the National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists and Content Panel Expert in Gerontological Nursing for the American Nurses Association American Nurses Credentialing Center in Washington, DC. She served as President of the Mid-America Congress on Aging in 1987 and was co-founder of the Nebraska Chapter of the National Association of Gerontological Nurses in 1986. She is an active member in professional organizations including Sigma Theta Tau International Nursing Honor Society, the Midwest Nursing Research Society, the National Gerontological Nursing Association, Christian Nurses Fellowship and the National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists.

Her community service endeavors have benefited numerous causes. She co-founded the Lincoln Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association in 1981 and served on the Board of Directors of the Omaha YWCA in 1983. In 1983 she began a long volunteer history with the Omaha Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association, serving as Vice-President, then President of the Board of Directors in 2005. She is a volunteer at the AAA Crisis Pregnancy Center in Omaha and is a member of Christ Community Church.

For her many efforts, she has been honored with various accommodations including the 2008 Nebraska Distinguished Nurse by the Nebraska March of Dimes, the 2008 Outstanding Volunteer of the Year by the Midlands Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association, and the 2004 Outstanding Gerontological Clinical Nurse Specialist by the National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialist and the John A. Hartford Institute of Geriatric Nursing at New York University. In 2002, she was inducted as a Fellow in the National Gerontological Nursing Association.

The Conley family has been an integral part of the civic and non-profit sector of Omaha. Queen Allison's grandfather Eugene A. Conley is a retired President of Guarantee Mutual Life Insurance Company. During his professional career in Omaha he served on numerous civic non-profit boards as well in several professional

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organizations. Eugene Conley served as a Councillor of the Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben Foundation from 1978 to 1979 and was appointed as a Governor in 1980. He served as a Governor until 1990 when he became a Governor Emeritus. His wife, Erma Grace Conley, passed away in 2000 at age 74. She was very involved in the community serving a variety of organizations including the Uta Halle Girls Village Guild, the Nebraska Hospital Auxiliary and the Metropolitan Arts Council. The Conley family has been honored in the past with Dr. Carol Sue Conley, serving as the 87<sup>th</sup> Queen of Quivira in 1981 and Queen Allison serving as a Page in 1995 and Princess in 2008.

Queen Allison's maternal grandmother, Alice Forgy Marks passed away in 1993 and lived in Omaha for six years after she retired as a learning disabilities specialist with the Department of Defense. Her maternal grandfather Claude Erwin Marks, Jr. is retired from the USAF and was a high school industrial arts teacher in Grandview, MO and he and his wife reside in Lee's Summit, MO.

The Ak-Sar-Ben Coronation Ball has a mission of promoting, recognizing and celebrating volunteerism, philanthropy and community pride. More than \$3 million in scholarship funding has been raised from Coronation Ball proceeds.

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