



For more information, contact:

Al Setka
Director of Communications
Great Ape Trust of Iowa
515.243.3580
515.720.7430 (mobile)
asetka@greatapetrust.org

Scientist to retire from bonobo lab duties at Great Ape Trust of Iowa

Dr. Sue Savage-Rumbaugh to continue bonobo research and expand scientific opportunities beyond The Trust

Des Moines, Iowa – January 02, 2008 – A pioneer in the field of primate cognition and language studies, Dr. Sue Savage-Rumbaugh has announced her retirement from Great Ape Trust of Iowa. Savage-Rumbaugh is retiring from the administrative and laboratory duties in the Great Ape Trust bonobo facility to focus exclusively on scientific research.

Her retirement from Great Ape Trust was effective January 1, when she assumed the title of *Scientist with Special Standing*. This designation will afford Savage-Rumbaugh the opportunity to continue peer-reviewed scientific research with the bonobos at Great Ape Trust, maintain her collaborations with Trust scientists and enhance her scientific relationships with leading researchers and scientific institutions around the world.

“I am thrilled and deeply grateful for this unprecedented expression of support for ape language research and my long term future. Our collaborative work will continue to explore the boundaries of cognitive science,” said Savage-Rumbaugh. “This new role gives me the flexibility to continue my work with the bonobos, while allowing me to

NEWS RELEASE

expand into other areas of scientific inquiry, and to concentrate on writing, lecturing and teaching.”

Since 2006, Savage-Rumbaugh has been an affiliate professor in the Department of Anthropology at Iowa State University. Savage-Rumbaugh was awarded an honorary doctorate last month from her alma mater, Missouri State University in Springfield.

Great Ape Trust Founder and Chairman Ted Townsend became aware of Savage-Rumbaugh’s scientific work in Atlanta a decade ago and facilitated the transfer of the bonobo research facility to Great Ape Trust in 2005.

“Dr. Sue Savage-Rumbaugh is a pioneer and hero in her fascinating field,” said Townsend. “She deserves special recognition and a multifaceted foundation to further her profound inquiry.”

Savage-Rumbaugh joined Great Ape Trust following a 30-year association with Georgia State University’s Language Research Center (LRC). Her initial research at the LRC involved the collaboration with two young chimpanzees, Sherman and Austin, which laid the experimental and philosophical foundation for her future work with bonobos, including Kanzi.

Savage-Rumbaugh’s work with Kanzi, the first ape to learn language in the same manner as children, was detailed in *Language Comprehension in Ape and Child* published in *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development* (1993). It was selected by the “Millennium Project” as one of the top 100 most influential works in cognitive science in the 20th century by the University of Minnesota Center for Cognitive Sciences in 1991. Dr. Savage-Rumbaugh’s work is also featured in *Apes, Language and the Human Mind* (Oxford Press, 1996) and *Kanzi: The Ape at the Brink of the Human Mind* (John Wiley & Sons, 1995).

Savage-Rumbaugh’s honors include: The Smithsonian Institution’s display of “*Understanding Ourselves, Understanding Each Other*,” sponsored by the American Psychological Association’s Centennial Convention; being an invited speaker to the Nobel Conference XXXII (1996); receiving an Honorary Doctor of Science from the University of Chicago (1997) for her research with Sherman, Austin and Kanzi; and receiving the Leighton A. Wilkie Award in Anthropology from Indiana University (2000).

NEWS RELEASE

GREAT APE TRUST BACKGROUND

Great Ape Trust of Iowa is a scientific research facility in southeast Des Moines dedicated to understanding the origins and future of culture, language, tools and intelligence. When completed, Great Ape Trust will be the largest great ape facility in North America and one of the first worldwide to include all four types of great ape – bonobos, chimpanzees, gorillas and orangutans – for noninvasive interdisciplinary studies of their cognitive and communicative capabilities.

Great Ape Trust is dedicated to providing sanctuary and an honorable life for great apes, studying the intelligence of great apes, advancing conservation of great apes and providing unique educational experiences about great apes. Great Ape Trust of Iowa is a 501(c) 3 not-for-profit organization and is certified by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). To learn more about Great Ape Trust of Iowa, go to www.GreatApeTrust.org.

###