

ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION OF MOUNT HOLYOKE COLLEGE  
ACHIEVEMENT AWARD 2018

PRESENTED TO



*Lan Cao '83*

**LAN CAO, CLASS OF 1983**, the Alumnae Association of Mount Holyoke College is pleased to honor you with the Achievement Award. This award is presented to alumnae whose accomplishments and service to society exemplify the values and virtues set forth by the College.

Lan, you turned your experiences as a South Vietnamese refugee during the Vietnam War into two critically acclaimed novels that are at once intimate and epic in scope, all while pursuing a career in the law.

You were born in Saigon, where your father was chairman of the South Vietnamese Joint General Staff. When communist forces defeated South Vietnam in 1975, you were flown out of your home country to the United States, where you lived with close family friends in Avon, Connecticut. After Mount Holyoke and Yale Law School, you became a litigation and corporate attorney at a prominent New York City firm and clerked for a federal judge. In 1991 you were named a Ford Foundation Scholar. You served on the faculty of the William & Mary Law School for more than a decade and now are the Betty Hutton Williams Professor of International Economic Law at Chapman University's Dale E. Fowler School of Law. Meanwhile, you also embarked on a successful career writing fiction. When you published the semi-autobiographical *Monkey Bridge* in 1997, *The New York Times* likened you to writers Salman Rushdie and Bharati Mukherjee "in mapping the state of exile and its elusive geographies of loss and hope." Your second novel, 2014's *The Lotus and the Storm*, provided a singular window on the entwined paths of Americans and Vietnamese.

LAN, for your outstanding accomplishments, the Alumnae Association is honored to present you with the Achievement Award on this, your thirty-fifth, reunion.

MARCIA BRUMIT KROPP '67  
PRESIDENT  
ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION OF MOUNT HOLYOKE COLLEGE

NANCY BELLOWS PEREZ '76  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION OF MOUNT HOLYOKE COLLEGE