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## Mata Amritanandmayi honoured at NY university

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Posted On: 26-May-2010 13:22:33 By: Suman Guha Mozumder

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Mata Amritanandamayi Devi

**New York:** Mata Amritanandamayi Devi, commonly known as the hugging saint, was conferred an honorary doctorate in humane letters at a special ceremony by the State University of New York at its campus in Buffalo in upstate New York on Tuesday.

The honor was bestowed upon Amma, as Amritanandamayi Devi is lovingly addressed, in recognition of her 'tireless efforts' on behalf of global peace, for her commitment to education and for the far-reaching impact of her charitable organizations in relieving poverty and human

suffering in India and around the world.

"I am extremely honored by this (award) and very happy about the latest educational collaboration between the University at Buffalo and Amrita University," she said. She was alluding to the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the SUNY Buffalo and Amirtia University on social work and sciences Tuesday.

"I certainly would like further activities and collaborations between the two universities and would like to see expansion in areas of research and study," Amma said in her native Malayalam, which was translated for this correspondent in English by Dayamitra Chaitanya, chief of MA Center in USA. She is the chancellor of Amrita University

Amritanandamayi is only the second person after the Dalai Lama, to receive this honor from SUNY that confers honorary degrees to recognize excellence and extraordinary achievement in the fields of public affairs, the sciences, humanities and the arts, scholarship and education, business and philanthropy and social services. The honor that consists of a plaque was presented to Amma by SUNY Buffalo president John Simpson.

Close to 2,000 people attended Tuesday's special event honoring Amma, including about 100 people from Amrita University and Amrita Foundation, including university vice chancellor P Venkatrangan, all of whom had come all the way from India. Provost of Sunny Buffalo Satish Tripathi was also present.

The honoree degrees are given to those whose achievements exemplify the mission and purpose of the university and to honor meritorious and outstanding service to the university, the State of New York, the United States, or to humanity at large as also to recognize individuals whose lives and significant achievements should serve as examples of the university's aspirations for its students.



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