

**Spring Convocation  
May 30 – June 2, 2017  
St. John's Campus  
Dr. Gary Kachanoski, President and Vice-Chancellor**

**The following is a consolidated text of remarks made to convocation**

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Welcome to our 2017 Spring Convocation on our St. John's Campus, Memorial University. We are so pleased that you have joined us for what is always a special time in the life of a university, a time when we celebrate the success of our students.

So, of course, a special welcome and congratulations to every one of you – our graduating students.

I know that your parents, families, friends and professors all played a supporting role in your success, and they are all here to cheer your accomplishments. But make no mistake – ultimately it was your dedication, hard work and talent that brought you here today, so congratulations.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in congratulating our graduating students.

Every degree conferred today is the result of a personal journey requiring significant commitment and work, and by itself is worthy of considerable accolades as an important milestone in each student's life. And yet, every year our students amaze us with leadership and achievements above and beyond their required programs or responsibilities that distinguishes them at a national and international level.

For example, just a few months ago, the Memorial University Sea-Hawks curling team under skip Adam Boland won the University-Sports Men's Curling Canada

Championship. The team finished their national championship-winning season with a perfect 17-0 record.

The last time Team Boland lost a match was in the Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Curling Championship to Team Gushue, the 2017 Tim Horton's Brier Champions and Men's World Champion. I think Team Boland from Memorial can be excused for losing to Team Gushue, our Men's World Champions!

This is just the third national championship for a Memorial University varsity team, sharing the honour with the 1970 men's soccer team and the 2010-11 men's curling team. We couldn't be more proud, as we also are with many other student achievements at the national and international level.

Joining us on stage today, representing the provincial government, I would like to acknowledge and welcome the honourable minister. Minister, on behalf of Memorial University, thank you for joining us here today to celebrate the success of the university and its graduates.

Also joining us today is the Board of Regents member. All of our regents volunteer their time and contribute significantly to our university. Would you please join me thanking and acknowledging our regents?

I am also pleased to acknowledge, in particular, our PhD and doctor of psychology students graduating there today. The attainment of these degrees is a singular achievement and an extraordinary commitment of time, emotional energy and financial resources towards the fulfillment of a lifelong quest.

And we have invited our doctor of philosophy and doctor of psychology graduands to join the faculty on stage as a small gesture of our regard for their

remarkable achievement. Please join me in acknowledging and congratulating them.

### Honorary Graduates

Today special individuals will join the ranks of those named as honorary graduates of Memorial University.

I am speaking of Moya Greene, a proud alumna of Memorial University with a distinguished career in the federal public service, and an extraordinarily successful career in the business and private sector, including appointments as president and CEO of Canada Post, and since 2010 chief executive officer of the Royal Mail in England, the first non-Briton and only woman ever to hold that post.

For her leadership and significant contributions at the national and international level to both public and private sectors, Ms. Greene will receive an honorary doctor of laws degree.

I am speaking of author and science journalist Bob McDonald, known by Canadians as “the science guy.” Mr. McDonald has spent the last three decades as Canada’s unofficial science expert with an incredible ability for taking complex scientific topics and explaining them in understandable terms.

As host of CBC’s Quirks and Quarks – the award-winning science program – and through his many television and radio appearances, he has engaged children and adults alike in many scientific discoveries, experiments and happenings, effectively opening up the field of science with an unparalleled approach.

For his outstanding contributions to the promotion of science, and for helping us understand the world around us, Mr. McDonald will receive an honorary doctor of laws degree.

I am speaking of Ross Traverse who for over 40 years as a teacher, advisor, entrepreneur, practitioner, mentor and author has illustrated a willingness and ability to provide valuable horticultural and gardening instruction.

Through books, articles and talk shows, he has provided his sage advice and in doing so has instilled a love of agriculture and gardening in many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

For his contributions to cool climate agriculture, our province's food security and quality of life, and for his untiring willingness to share his knowledge as much as possible, Mr. Traverse will receive an honorary doctor of laws degree.

I am speaking of Donald Lawson, business leader and visionary philanthropist with an exemplary record of hands-on service to his community and country.

Since assuming the chair of the Counselling Foundation of Canada, a family-based foundation, \$65 million has been distributed in support of learning and physical disabilities, counselling, youth employment centres, programs for encouraging educational development of disadvantaged youth, and for the mentoring of rural youth.

For his belief in boundless human potential, his contributions to education and the response of youth to education, Mr. Lawson will receive an honorary doctor of laws degree.

I am speaking of Marilyn Churley, a leader and advocate promoting social justice and equal rights for women, and who helped to create services to assist victims of sexual and physical violence.

Elected to the Ontario legislature in 1990, she was responsible for some of the most important and influential environmental legislation in the history of the

province, and also worked tirelessly to pass legislation making it easier for adoptees and birth parents to find each other.

As an Ontario justice of the peace since 2009, she continues to work to improve the lives of women at risk, in particular by advocating and promoting better services for poor and disadvantaged women who find themselves in the criminal justice system.

For her longstanding commitment to environmental responsibility, social justice and equality, and as a role model in politics, Ms. Churley will receive an honorary degree of laws degree.

Ladies and gentlemen, our university's unique origin, our vision, mission and core values paint a picture of who we were, who we are and what we aspire to become.

Memorial is focused on meeting the needs of our students, developing innovative living and learning spaces, building and renewing appropriate infrastructure for 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching, research and public engagement, and making a difference in our communities.

We tell all our stories of success and achievements throughout the year in our *Research Matters* magazine, our alumni magazine, *Luminus*, our *Gazette* news site, and, of course, each fall in our on-line annual *President's Report*. The current theme of the *Gazette* is student success, which is particularly appropriate during this convocation season.

And I encourage you to learn more about the exceptional people at Memorial University, our faculty, staff, students, retirees and alumni, and how as active

engaged citizens, they make the world a better place to live – safer, more prosperous, and definitely more interesting.

A key part of their success is the sustained and unwavering support from our partners. So I would like to take this opportunity to thank our community, municipal and private sector leaders, and other partners, for your unwavering commitment and support of Memorial University.

And make no mistake, now more than ever, support from all of our partners is vital. Only by working together can we ensure that we will achieve our vision to be one of the most distinguished public universities in Canada and beyond, and ensure that we continue to fulfill our important mandate as our province's only university – fostering student success, and the social, cultural and economic development of our great province.

A public university serving the public good, a university that embodies the aspirations of those who founded Memorial University College in 1925 – to be a living legacy to those who paid the ultimate price for our freedom in the First World War and in subsequent conflicts. A living legacy dedicated to the advancement of our society through education.

Graduands, you are part of this legacy and this aspiration. You walked into this hall today as students who have completed the requirements for your degrees. You will leave as alumni of Memorial University, joining a family more than 90,000 strong.

You have earned the rights and privileges associated with your degree. And in today's global, increasingly connected, competitive, and complicated world, the value, benefits and importance of your learning, your experiences and your

know-how have never been greater – never greater for you personally, but also for your community, your country and the world.

This is your time, time to take to heart the responsibilities that also come with your degree and make your mark in Newfoundland and Labrador, across the country and around the globe.

Best wishes to each of you as you leave here today to begin the next adventure in your lives.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me once again in congratulating our graduates. Thank you.

*At select sessions, Dr. Kachanoski called on Memorial's vice-presidents to make their remarks to convocation. He also invited two outgoing deans to address convocation:*

Ladies and gentlemen, we recently introduced a new tradition of inviting outgoing deans to address convocation.

I now have the pleasure of introducing Dr. Lynne Phillips, dean of our Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Dr. Phillips has served as dean for five years and under her academic leadership, many faculty renewal initiatives were completed which included, among others, the development of two new diplomas and five certificate programs, the launch of an international BA and a joint BA/BSc, and importantly, changing the name of the entire faculty to match the evolving understanding and nature of humanities and social sciences.

Dr. Phillips also led initiatives to revitalize humanities and social science research and institutes, including expanding the mandate of the English Language Research Centre to create the Nexus Centre for Collaborative Research.

She also chaired the Law School Feasibility Study in 2013 and the internal Memorial University Law School Committee from 2014 to 2016.

On behalf of the Memorial Community, I want to thank her for her academic leadership of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, her belief in consultation and cooperation, and her good humour and patience, all of which will be greatly missed.

I have the pleasure of introducing Dr. Wilf Zerbe, dean of the Faculty of Business Administration.

Serving as dean for seven years, Dr. Zerbe led a rigorous accreditation review process that three times saw the faculty attain international accreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business.

Under his leadership, three faculty research chairs have been established, and two new campus-wide student entrepreneurship centres have been created – the Memorial Centre for Entrepreneurship with the Faculty of Engineering, and the Centre for Social Enterprise with the School of Social Work.

Dr. Zerbe has been a strong supporter of students and student competitions with significant successes, including:

- In January of this year, our MBA students won the Concordia Cup making Memorial the most successful team in the history of the John Molson MBA International Case Competition.



- In 2016, Enactus Memorial won the World Cup and national and regional competitions with their SucSeed initiative. Enactus Memorial is the most successful Enactus student team in the world with two world championships and ten national titles – the last national title won just earlier this month.

On behalf of the Memorial University community, I want to thank Dr. Zerbe for his academic leadership of the Faculty of Business Administration and contributions to all of Memorial University.