

**Fall Convocation  
St. John's, Oct. 20, 2016,**

***The following is a consolidated text of remarks made to convocation by Dr. Gary Kachanoski, president and vice-chancellor***

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Welcome to our 2016 fall 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.

I would like to acknowledge and welcome the member of the Board of Regents who joins us on stage. All of our regents volunteer their time and contribute significantly to our university. Would you please join me welcoming and acknowledging our regents?

I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the absence of a familiar face with the sudden passing of a true gentleman and champion of Memorial University. I am speaking of Dr. Richard Marceau who came to Memorial in 2013 as our vice-president (research) after a distinguished career as an academic and professional engineer.

During his short time with us he worked tirelessly to not only enhance Memorial's research capacity, but all aspects of Memorial, so that this university and its people can continue to positively impact the world around us. Daily, his personal approach was the same – bringing a kind and positive outlook to the challenges and opportunities of academia, as well as the challenges that life brings us all. He was a friend to many in our extended university community and will be missed.

And I certainly want to thank Dr. Ray Gosine who has been appointed vice-president (research) *pro tempore*, for stepping in. Dr. Gosine is a respected member of the Memorial community who has guided our university's research activities for many years. He joined the vice-president (research) portfolio in 2008, and our university has benefitted greatly from his leadership and administration skills.

Today we are joined by a special individual who we are all pleased will soon join the ranks of those named as honorary graduates of Memorial University.

I am speaking of William Marshall, who for the past 60 years has had a distinguished career in both provincial politics and the law. For his leadership and contribution to public life and the economic development of Newfoundland and Labrador, he will receive an honorary doctor of laws.

I am speaking of the Honourable Pat Carney, business journalist, economic consultant, educator and accomplished politician. For her major contributions to Canada's political and economic development, her distinguished service as a member of the House of Commons and Senate, and for her role in the advancement of women in public life, she will receive an honorary doctor of laws degree.

We will hear more about, and from, Mr. Marshall/Ms. Carney a little later in this convocation session.

We are also pleased to recognize retired members of faculty who were each recently accorded the title professor *emeritus* by Memorial University's Senate and Board of Regents. They are:

- Dr. Ken Barter
- Dr. Shakti Chandra
- Dr. Leslie Rourke
- Dr. Alex Faseruk
- Dr. Edgar Goodaire
- Dr. Alice Collins
- Dr. Beverley Diamond

Our *professores emeriti* have given their academic, scholarly and professional lives in service to Memorial University's mission. They have inspired generations of students and helped build this fine institution.

On behalf of the entire Memorial University community, I offer sincere congratulations to each of them, and you will be hearing a little more about them later in this convocation session.

I am also pleased to acknowledge and welcome two new deans who have joined our senior leadership team.

Dr. Ian Sutherland was appointed as our new dean of the School of Music effective July 1. He comes to Memorial from his role as associate dean for research and director of PhD studies at IEDC–Bled School of Management in Slovenia. Born and raised in Newfoundland and Labrador, and internationally

recognized as an expert in the intersection of the arts and business, Dr. Sutherland was originally trained as a professional musician.

Welcome as well to Dr. Margaret Steele, who assumed the position of dean of the Faculty of Medicine in August. Dr. Steele is an experienced academic administrator, scholar and psychiatrist who has held several senior leadership roles over the course of her extensive career in medicine and academia. She comes to Memorial from Western University in London, Ont., where she was vice-dean for hospital and interfaculty relations in the Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Ms. Sheila Singleton, university registrar and secretary of the Senate of Memorial University. This is Ms. Singleton's last convocation as she is retiring next month.

Ms. Singleton has worked with Memorial for 36 years and joined the Office of the Registrar in 1984. Prior to serving as university registrar she held the roles of acting registrar, deputy registrar and associate registrar.

In recognition of her efforts over the years, Memorial University's student union presented Ms. Singleton with the union's inaugural award for Outstanding Contribution to Student Life, an honour of which she says she is particularly proud.

Sheila, on behalf of the entire Memorial University community, and in particular the many students who have benefitted from your commitment and dedication, I offer my sincere thanks and best wishes on your retirement.

Every degree conferred this morning 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.

In particular, however, I would like to acknowledge our PhD and doctor of psychology students graduating here today. The attainment of these degrees is a singular achievement, an extraordinary commitment of time, emotional energy and financial resources towards the fulfillment of a lifelong quest.

Ladies and gentlemen, every year our students, along with our faculty and staff, amaze us with leadership and achievements above and beyond their required programs or responsibilities that distinguishes them at a national and international level.

And this year, one team stands out. This past spring our Enactus Memorial student team won their eighth national championship in 11 years (they were world champions in 2008 in Singapore), in a competition that focuses on improving the lives through entrepreneurial action and the development of socially responsible enterprises that inspire hope and create opportunity where little existed.

This year, Enactus Memorial undergraduate students from faculties of Humanities and Social Sciences, Business, Science and Engineering and Applied Science are together running 13 different community projects that address a range of economic, social and environmental issues.

Included is the new initiative this year called Project SucSeed, a project that in one year developed and then manufactured an integrated portable inexpensive hydroponic system that addresses food insecurity in remote and isolated communities by enabling people to grow fresh produce in their homes, schools or

communities, while simultaneously creating manufacturing jobs here for youth at risk.

Earlier this month, competing as Team Canada against 35 other national teams at the Enactus World Cup international competition in Toronto, they were once again crowned world champions.

To put this in perspective, this year there were 1,700 university campuses competing for 36 national teams and one world champion: Memorial University. We couldn't be more proud!

An announcement earlier this month also marks an unprecedented era in research innovation at Memorial.

Through the Canada First Research Excellence Fund, almost \$100 million was awarded to create the Ocean Frontier Institute, an historic partnership between Memorial, Dalhousie and the University of Prince Edward Island.

This landmark investment is one that truly moves Memorial from world class to world leader in research strengths directly related to our COASTS initiative (Cold Ocean and Arctic Science, Technology and Society).

We tell our stories of success and achievements throughout the year in our *Research Matters* magazine, in our alumni magazine *Luminus*, on our *Gazette* news site, and, of course, each fall in our on-line *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 of course, I would be remiss in not thanking our key partner, the provincial government. I want to acknowledge the honourable minister who joins us on stage today. Minister, on behalf of Memorial University, I extend my sincere thanks to you and your government for your continued support of Memorial.

Ladies and gentlemen, 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 by contributing to the social, cultural and economic development of our great province.

The university 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.

This year we continue to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the First World War period, and in particular this past July, the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the conflict at Beaumont Hamel. The Danger Tree sculpture and new memorial site located on our Grenfell Campus that was officially unveiled by Her Royal Highness, the Princess Royal, is certainly a powerful symbol of our university's unique origin.

But it is also a reminder that in past dark times of adversity and unsettling events, it was important then as it is now, to have a vision and a focus on the future, a reminder that through teaching, research and public engagement, our university, the Memorial University, works towards a better future.

Graduands, you are part of this legacy. You walked into this hall today as students who have successfully completed the requirements for your degrees. You will leave as graduates of Memorial University, as alumni, joining a family of almost 90,000 strong. You are the rightful heirs of the bold young people who stepped forward to preserve our freedom. And you honour their memory with your success and presence here today.

This is your time to take to heart the responsibilities and privileges that come with your degree and make your mark in Newfoundland and Labrador, and across the country and the world. Now, more than ever, we need your ingenuity, your know-how and your leadership to advance this province and our country.

Congratulations to each of you as you leave here today to begin the next adventures in your lives. I know you will do us proud.

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