

Good morning, everyone.

Welcome to our 2018 fall convocation for Grenfell 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 each of you, our graduating students.

I know your parents, families, friends and professors all played supporting roles in your success, but make no mistake – ultimately it was your dedication, hard work and talent that brought you here today, so congratulations on your accomplishments.

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

Joining us on stage this morning representing the provincial government is the Honourable Gerry Byrne, Minister of Fisheries and Land Resources. Minister, on behalf of Memorial University, thank you for joining us here today to celebrate the success of Grenfell Campus and our graduates.

I would also like to acknowledge and welcome Iris Petten, chair of the Board of Regents of Memorial, and a dedicated and passionate supporter of our university. All of our Board of Regents members volunteer their time and contribute significantly to our university and a number of them are here

today. Would you please join me welcoming and acknowledging them and our minister?

This morning we also welcome a special individual who will soon join the ranks of those who have received the university's highest honour – the honorary doctorate degree.

Dr. Anne Martin-Matthews, a Memorial alumna, and Canada's unparalleled leader and champion of research on aging. Dr. Martin-Matthews served as scientific director of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research Institute of Aging from 2004-2011 and is an international leader in research on social gerontology.

For her extensive research contributions to the field of gerontology, Dr. Martin-Matthews will receive an honorary doctor of laws degree this morning. And you hear more about, and from, her, a little later.

We are also pleased to recognize a retired member of faculty, Dr. Olaf Janzen, who was recently accorded the distinguished title 'professor *emeritus*' by Memorial University's Senate and Board of Regents.

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 Dr. Janzen, and you will be hearing a little more about him later as well.

Ladies and gentlemen, as president of Memorial University for the past eight years, I have been honoured to personally connect with this campus and this community – to experience the positive impact of important and

strategic initiatives and investments at Grenfell, and share each of these successes with our extended community here on the west coast.

There is so much to be proud of as we look back at more than four decades of university education on the west coast of Newfoundland.

Grenfell's success is due in no small part to the passion and dedication of all those who work at Grenfell, and I thank each and every one of them. In particular, I want to acknowledge Vice-President Dr. Jeff Keshen.

Since coming to Grenfell, he has worked tirelessly to build and strengthen community relationships, to improve opportunities and experiences for students, and to meet the needs of the entire Grenfell community.

The accomplishments at Grenfell in the past number of years have put the campus in an exceedingly solid position, with academic program growth, along with infrastructure improvements, enhancements to the research profile and public engagement opportunities, just to name a few developments.

And, of course, the high calibre of Grenfell's students is a key part of its success. As then-Premier Frank Moores said at a banquet celebrating the opening of Grenfell in 1975, "Universities are judged by their students, and reputations are built by the young people who pass through its doors." And what a great reputation Grenfell Campus has and what a wonderful group of students we have graduating here today.

With continuing strong enrolment at Grenfell, including substantial increases in international enrolment from some 40 countries, we know we can expect great things in the future with the continued implementation of Grenfell's Vision 2020 – the five-year strategic plan to attract and retain a

diverse and growing community of enthusiastic students, faculty and staff who choose the unique environment of Grenfell Campus for their education and employment.

Through all of this, Grenfell's impact and reach will only continue to grow. And, of course, its future success will continue to build on the strength and integral connections that exist between this university campus, this city and this region.

So I would like to take this opportunity to thank our community and municipal leaders and other partners for your unwavering support of Grenfell Campus again this year, and through that, your support for all of Memorial University.

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.

Now more than ever, support from all our partners is vital. Only by working together can we ensure that investments and initiatives help us achieve our important mandate – fostering student success, and the social, cultural and economic development of our province.

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.

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 and discovery of knowledge – a legacy that the Danger Tree sculpture on Grenfell Campus so rightly commemorates.

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 of more than 90,000 strong.

You have earned the rights and privileges associated with your degree. And now is your time, your 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 in once again congratulating our graduates. Thank you.