

**Fall Convocation, Grenfell Campus**  
**Dr. Gary Kachanoski, President and Vice-Chancellor**  
**Thursday, May 17, 2017**

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

Welcome to our 2017 Spring 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 that 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.

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. And yet, every year our students amaze us with leadership and achievements above and beyond their required programs or responsibilities which distinguishes them at a national and international level.

For example, just two 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 we all agree that Team Boland from Memorial can be excused for losing to Team Gushue, 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 achievements at the national and international level.

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

Also joining us today is the Board of Regents representative. All of our regents – a number of them are here today – volunteer their time and contribute significantly to our university. Would you please join me in thanking our regents?

### Honorary graduates

This morning a special individual will join the ranks of those named as honorary graduates. I am speaking of Elder Calvin White, who for almost 50 years has championed social justice for Aboriginal people, and continues to do so.

---

Elder White has also served the Memorial University community through his collaborations at Grenfell Campus, including assisting research projects and community engagement initiatives, and facilitating a number of Aboriginal talking circles on Grenfell Campus, among many others.

For his pivotal role in achieving recognition for Newfoundland Mi'kmaq and his longstanding commitment to the rights of his people, Elder White will receive an honorary doctor of laws degree.

This evening a special individual will join the ranks of those named as honorary graduates. I am speaking of Dr. Frank Hayden who, during a career spanning 60 years, has had a profound dedication and interest in sport and fitness programs for all children, regardless of intellectual abilities – a passion leading to the vision and creation of the Special Olympics, which currently provide training and competition for more than five million athletes in more than 170 countries.

For his work in both creating the idea for the Special Olympics and for his critical role in ensuring that the idea became a reality, Dr. Hayden will receive an honorary doctor of laws degree this evening.

Ladies and gentlemen, as president of Memorial University for the past seven years, it has been an honour to personally connect with this campus and this community.

It's been a pleasure 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 here on the west coast of Newfoundland.

Grenfell's success is due in no small part to the great work done by its senior academic leadership team, including past vice-president (Grenfell Campus), Dr. Mary Bluehardt who, as many of you know, has just left us to become the next president of Mount St. Vincent University.

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

And on behalf of the entire university community, I would certainly like to thank Dr. Ivan Emke for assuming the role of vice-president *pro tempore* for Grenfell Campus. I know the campus will continue to flourish in Dr. Emke's capable hands with the continued implementation of Vision 20/20, 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 western Newfoundland partners for your unwavering support of Grenfell Campus again this year, and through it, your support for all 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 continue to fulfill our important mandate – fostering student success, and the social, cultural and economic development of our great 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.

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 subsequent conflicts.

A living legacy dedicated to the advancement of our society through education – a legacy that the new Danger Tree sculpture on Grenfell Campus so appropriately 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 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.

---