

Fall Convocation  
Dr. Gary Kachanoski, President and Vice-Chancellor:  
Friday, October 2, 2015

Good morning everyone!

Welcome to our 2015 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 every one 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 all of our graduating students.

I would like to acknowledge and welcome Mary Cormier who joins us on stage this morning. Mary is a dedicated member of our Board of Regents and is representing our board chair, Iris Petten, who unfortunately could not join us for convocation this morning. All of our Board of Regents members volunteer their time and contribute significantly to our university, would you please join me welcoming and acknowledging them.

---

Also on stage is a special guest, one whom we are all pleased will soon join the ranks of distinguished individuals named as honorary graduates of Memorial University.

I am speaking of the Honourable Robert Wells, Rhodes Scholar, public servant, lawyer, government minister, justice of Newfoundland and Labrador's Supreme Court.

For his distinguished career in law and public service and for his contributions to improving off-shore safety, he will receive an honorary doctor of laws degree this morning. You will hear more about, and from the Honourable Robert Wells a little later.

We are also pleased to recognize two retired members of faculty, Dr. Georg Gunther and Dr. Paul Wilson who were recently accorded the title professors *emeriti* by Memorial University's Senate and Board of Regents.

Our professors *emeriti* have given their academic, scholarly and professional lives in service to Memorial University's mission and to Grenfell Campus. 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 them both, and you will be hearing a little more about them later as well.

Also joining us is Dr. Ian Warkentin who will be awarded Grenfell's inaugural research award at convocation this morning. Congratulations to him as well.

Ann Marie Vaughan, president of College of the North Atlantic is with us as well.

---

Ladies and gentlemen, as president of Memorial University for the past five years, it has been my pleasure to personally connect with this campus and this community, and watch the positive impact of important and strategic initiatives and investments here at Grenfell, and to experience each of these successes with our extended community here on the west coast.

There is so much to be proud of as we celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Grenfell Campus – the new arts and science extension, the wonderful new residence, new partnerships and academic programs, including the brand new MSc in boreal ecosystems and agricultural science – Memorial’s first program in agriculture – a graduate program supported by the new \$8 million world-class Boreal Ecosystem Research Facility supporting cutting edge research in forest, agriculture and environmental sciences.

And I know we can expect great things in the future through Grenfell’s Vision 20/20, a 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.

And this is so important because, as I have often said, Newfoundland and Labrador needs Grenfell Campus to be successful, not just to support advanced education and the growth and development of the west coast of the island, but for the entire province.

This success and upward trajectory are due in no small part to the great work being done by the university’s vice-president for Grenfell Campus, Dr. Mary Bluehardt, and her dedicated senior leadership team.

---

And with a renewed emphasis on public engagement, teaching and learning, and an expanding research, scholarship and creative activity portfolio, Grenfell's impact and reach will only continue to grow, future success that will 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.

Only by working together can we ensure investments and initiatives help us achieve our important mandate – fostering student success, and the social, cultural, and economic development of our great province.

And of course, I would be remiss in not thanking a vitally important partner in this endeavour -- the provincial government. I want to acknowledge the Honourable Vaughan Granter, Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture, who joins us today on stage today. Minister, on behalf of Memorial University I extend my sincere thanks to you and your government for your continued support of our university. Please join me in thanking them.

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. And we want and need you, our new graduates, alumni and friends, and partners to continue with us on that exciting and challenging journey.

So it is important that every spring and every fall, Memorial's Grenfell Campus community gathers here in Corner Brook for convocation, to admit

---

the graduands to their degrees – one of the most important tasks we undertake today.

But university convocation is more than that.

Convocation is an assembly of our university community, and together with our extended community, we gather to not only celebrate our student and academic accomplishments, but also to re-affirm and express our on-going responsibilities to serve the public good.

Memorial University has a special obligation to the people of the province. The university embodies an aspiration of those who founded Memorial University College – to be the living legacy of those who paid the ultimate price for our freedom in the First World War and in subsequent conflicts, and through that, the advancement of our society through education.

As we mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the First World War, we remind ourselves of this legacy, and through teaching, research and public engagement, we work towards a better world.

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

---