

Address to Rotary  
Dr. Gary Kachanoski, President and Vice-chancellor  
January 30, 2014

*(Check Against Delivery)*

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Good afternoon. Before I begin I would like to also take a moment to honour Dr. Arthur May who, as you all know, was president *emeritus* of Memorial University.

The university community shares your sorrow on this sad news.

Dr. May served as our president and vice-chancellor from 1990-99. During his tenure as president, Memorial witnessed a significant growth in graduate student enrolment; undertook a transformative fundraising campaign, the *Opportunity Fund*; saw the expansion of then-Grenfell College to offering multiple, full-degree programs; and the Marine Institute joined the university.

The university community extends its sincere condolences to Sonya and the rest of the May family. Art will be missed by all.

I want to begin by thanking the members of the Rotary Club of St. John's for once again inviting me to speak about Memorial University, and also for your ongoing support of our university.

Through student scholarships, through individual philanthropy, and through so many of you being involved in our activities, you make Memorial so much better. So on behalf of the entire university community I thank you for that, and for all the good work that Rotary does in our community.

This is my fourth presentation to the club and it's been wonderful getting to know many of you, and to have the opportunity to speak to you about some of the more noteworthy happenings at Memorial from the past year, as well as new initiatives and plans over this next year and in the years to come.

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And of course, what an interesting and eventful start it has been to this new year. The recent cold weather and power outages did not leave us unscathed. Like each of you, we faced our challenges – some big, some small.

A few of our buildings had serious water damage, particularly the Marine Institute and the annex of the arts building, but working together we came through, and I'm pleased to say we're back to normal now.

And I want to use this opportunity to acknowledge the help and co-operation we received from both Nalcor and Newfoundland Power, and also the tremendous efforts of our staff as we managed through the situation.

Well, at last year's rotary presentation I noted the departure of General Rick Hillier as chancellor, and welcomed Dr. Susan Dyer Knight as Memorial's seventh chancellor.

This year I am pleased to welcome and acknowledge a number of new people to our senior leadership team who are here this afternoon:

- our new chair of the Board of Regents, Ms. Iris Petten;
- Dr. Richard Marceau our new vice-president (research);
- Dr. Heather Carnahan, new dean of our School of Human Kinetics and Recreation; and,
- Dr. Donna Hardy Cox, new dean of our School of Social Work.

We have certainly enjoyed another full year of accomplishments and success across all of Memorial's campuses. A number of those accomplishments and stories are highlighted in our new president's report. So, now, with a short video, I'd like to introduce to you, *Face Forward*, the president's report for 2013.

*[Face Forward: President's report 2013 video]*

As you can see, we're doing something a little different this year. For the first time, the president's report is a stand-alone multimedia website.

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The responsive design, interactive elements and ability to easily get feedback from readers, combined with the environmental and financially efficient benefits of not printing a document, made the decision to move entirely online a simple one.

Of course, what hasn't changed are the great stories, and the award winning approach of telling those stories by our outstanding marketing and communications people. So I'd like to show you a few key elements of the report, and just some of the good things happening at your university.

The Teaching and Learning section highlights student successes throughout the year, from the successful completion of our unique Aboriginal Social Work program, to university staff members who also graduated at convocation.

It just makes sense that teaching and learning – and students – are at the centre of everything we do. We encourage students to be explorers and support them on their personal journeys of discovery through experiences that are learner-centred, innovative and informed by evidence and experience. But let's let one of our students, Laura Pittman, our latest Rhodes scholar, speak for themselves in this short video.

[Laura Pittman video]

Our Research Strategy Framework outlines how Memorial continually strives to address the needs of Newfoundland and Labrador through research, innovation and development programs that are both provincially relevant and internationally significant, and help the province diversify and build the knowledge-based economy of the future.

Here is one great example.

[Mani Larijani video]

Finally our Public Engagement Framework launched this past year provides the third element of the foundation on which Memorial will continue to grow and develop. It establishes a vision for Memorial to be a world leader as an engaged public university, through fulfilling our special obligation to the people of this great province.

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We study small-scale fisheries, educate doctors for rural practice, help individuals start businesses and connect communities with research, among thousands of other large and small activities.

Our Harris Centre is particularly focused on connecting Memorial to its stakeholders.

[Harris Centre video]

As I mentioned last year, and each and every year since I came to Memorial in 2010, infrastructure renewal is our top priority. We have over \$335 million worth of projects just completed, or near completion. One of our new St. John's campus residences opened this fall – I think you'll enjoy this video.

[residence construction video]

If only projects could be completed that quickly.

A similar second high rise residence here in St John's welcomed its first students earlier this month. The new residence at Grenfell Campus welcomed students last fall and our new medical building is preparing to open later this spring.

But of course, the biggest news of all came last fall. With the design and development of 425,000 sq ft of new state-of-the-art core sciences infrastructure set to commence, we are embarking on what is arguably the most ambitious re-development plan for the university since the St. John's campus was first conceived in the early 1950s.

In 2025 we will observe the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of our institution as Memorial University College. We expect that by that time we will be able to celebrate a campus with infrastructure that will rival the best in the country, and perhaps the world.

We are confident that we can and will achieved this because of the tremendous support we receive from the provincial government, from the business community and other groups, and from donors and friends—just like each of you.

As I mentioned, support for the university comes from all over. Record breaking donations of over \$67 million for our *Dare To* fundraising campaign came from all

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across the country and indeed the world. Almost \$2 million was given from outside of Canada – a testament to our growing international reach and reputation, and the success of alumni worldwide

It really is an exciting time for Memorial University. Our research funding has seen incredible growth this year, up almost 20 per cent and approaching \$130 million per year.

Graduate student enrolment continues to climb, having increased by almost 21 per cent over just the past three years, for a total of more than 3,400 students this past fall. And we continue to experience strong demand for our academic programs at all levels, despite declining K-12 provincial enrolments.

With strong provincial government support, we have been able to recruit, and will continue to recruit, the talented people necessary for the success of the province. Government support for the doubling of our faculty of engineering is a great example of this, and a great example of how we can contribute to the province's population growth strategy.

Ladies and gentlemen, I've really only skimmed the surface of what is available in this year's report. It really is worth the time to learn more about the exceptional people and programs of Memorial and the impact they are having on our communities.

Stories of success with various themes will be regularly updated throughout the year, so you can learn about Memorial and its successes in real-time.

The first themed edition focuses on Northern and Arctic work being done at Memorial. I won't go into detail on that today, but one short example is Dr. Trevor Bell of Memorial University's Department of Geography, who together with his co-investigators and their multidisciplinary team, have been named one of three recipients of the \$1,000,000 Arctic Inspiration Prize for their work on the Sustainable Communities Initiative of the Nunatsiavut Government.

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I know there are many other initiatives we've undertaken in recent months that are not covered in our president's report that I'm sure you'd like updates on, but I only have time to mention a few of them.

First, the feasibility of a law school. You may have heard in the news last month that a review committee unanimously recommended its establishment. We will finish external and internal consultations and comments on the report this month, and then we will decide on next steps.

You may also be aware that Memorial is reviewing the role competitive sports play in the life of the university. A review committee submitted its report which contains a number of aspirations and recommendations.

In December, we received comments from members of the public regarding the possibilities proposed by the report, and we have a committee led by Dr. Heather Carnahan, dean of HKR, proposing a strategic action and a budget plan for varsity and competitive sport at Memorial.

And finally, one more important initiative. This past year we undertook consultations province-wide to determine what might be the best approach to recognizing the upcoming 100 year WWI Commemorations. Many people and organizations would like to work with the university and share their community resources through partnerships.

Over the next four to five years, the university will undertake commemorative activities in three broad areas: academic programs; physical commemorations; and, finally, library, archives and other resources.

We hope through our commemoration activities we will continue to fulfill the original ideal of Memorial University College.

Ladies and gentlemen, as we go forward, Memorial's continued success will be shaped by the same collaborative effort involving every segment of Newfoundland and Labrador society that has brought us this far.

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With the right investments, strategic planning and continued support from the people of this great province, we are positioning Memorial University, and Newfoundland and Labrador, for continued success.

Once again, thank you for inviting me here today. I am always pleased to speak with pride about the accomplishments and achievements of your Memorial University.

