

NEWS RELEASE



For Immediate Release
April 19, 2012 | 065-12

CONTACT

Jennifer Casey, Director: University Relations
Wilfrid Laurier University
519-884-0710 ext. 2149 or jcasey@wlu.ca

Kevin Crowley, Director: Communications & Public Affairs
Wilfrid Laurier University
519-884-0710 ext. 3070 or kcrowley@wlu.ca

Wilfrid Laurier University to award eight honorary degrees at spring convocation

WATERLOO — Wilfrid Laurier University will award honorary degrees to eight distinguished recipients during the university's spring convocation ceremonies in June. As well, the university will bestow two Order of Wilfrid Laurier University awards for exemplary service to the university.

Nine convocation ceremonies will be held at Laurier's Waterloo campus from June 11 to 15, and three ceremonies will be held at the university's Brantford campus from June 19 to 20.

Honorary degree recipients:

Joseph Boyden is an award-winning novelist whose work has been influenced by his Métis heritage. His first novel, *Three Day Road*, won the McNally Robinson Aboriginal Book of the Year Award, the Amazon/Books in Canada First Novel Award, and the Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize in 2006, and was nominated for a 2005 Governor General's Award. His second novel, *Through Black Spruce*, won Canada's most prestigious literary prize, the ScotiaBank Giller Award in 2011, as well as the Libris Book of the Year and Libris Author of the Year awards. Boyden is also Laurier's Writer-in-Residence for 2011-12. He will receive an Honorary Doctor of Letters degree Wednesday, June 20 at the morning convocation ceremony at the Sanderson Centre for the Performing Arts in Brantford, starting at 10:30 a.m.

Margaret E. McCully is a distinguished plant biologist and former professor at Carleton University for more than 30 years. Her research explores how plant roots exploit the soil environment in search of nutrients. She is also known for developing new research techniques using optical and electron microscopy. McCully received her B.Sc. and M.Sc. from the University of Toronto, and her PhD from Harvard University. She received the Carleton University Scholarly Achievement Award in 1987, and the Lawson Medal in recognition of her lifetime contribution to botany in 1996. She will receive an Honorary Doctor of Science degree Tuesday, June 12 at the morning ceremony at the Laurier Athletic Complex on the Waterloo campus starting at 9:30 a.m.

James Campbell is a world-renowned clarinetist. He has produced more than 40 recordings and played as soloist with more than 60 orchestras. He won a Juno Award in 1985 for his disc *Stolen Gems*, and the Canadian Music Council named him Artist of the Year in 1989. A member of the Order of Canada, Campbell also received The Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal. In addition to being a professor at Indiana University Jacobs School of Music for more than 20 years, he is also artistic director of the Festival of Sound in Perry Sound, Ont., a position he has held for 26 seasons. Campbell will receive an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree Monday, June 11 at the afternoon ceremony at the Laurier Athletic Complex on the Waterloo campus starting at 2 p.m.

(more)

Dionne Brand is a poet, novelist, essayist and documentarian who was appointed Poet Laureate of Toronto in 2009. She frequently explores themes of gender, race, sexuality and feminism in her writing. She attended the University of Toronto where she earned BA and MA degrees. She is currently a professor of English at the University of Guelph where she also holds a University Research Chair. Brand has published 20 books and made four documentary films. Her 10 volumes of poetry include *Land to Light On*, winner of the Governor General's Award for Poetry and the Trillium Book Award in 1997, and *thirsty*, winner of the Pat Lowther Memorial Award from the League of Canadian Poets in 2003. In 2011 she won the Griffin Poetry Prize for *Ossuaries*, a book-length poem. Brand will receive an Honorary Doctor of Letters degree Wednesday, June 13 at the afternoon ceremony at the Laurier Athletic Complex on the Waterloo campus starting at 2 p.m.

Louise Halfe, also known as Sky Dancer, is an award-winning writer and poet. Raised on the Saddle Lake reserve in Alberta, she earned a BA in social work from the University of Regina and a certificate in drugs and alcohol counselling from the Nechi Training, Research and Health Promotions Institute. Her first book of poetry, *Bear Bones & Feathers*, won the Milton Acorn Award and was shortlisted for the Spirit of Saskatchewan Award and the General Lambert Award. Her second book, *Blue Marrow*, was a finalist for the Governor General's Award for Poetry. She has travelled extensively doing readings and presentations of her work, and in 2005 was named Saskatchewan's Poet Laureate. Halfe will receive an Honorary Doctor of Letters degree Wednesday, June 20 at the afternoon convocation ceremony at the Sanderson Centre for the Performing Arts in Brantford, starting at 2:30 p.m.

Panos Pardalos is a leading expert in global and combinatorial optimization, with current research focusing on network design problems, optimization in telecommunications, e-commerce, data mining, biomedical applications and massive computing. He is a Distinguished Professor of Industrial and Systems Engineering at the University of Florida, and an affiliated faculty member of the university's Computer Science Department, the Hellenic Studies Center and the Biomedical Engineering program. He will receive an Honorary Doctor of Science degree Tuesday, June 12 at the afternoon ceremony at the Laurier Athletic Complex on the Waterloo campus starting at 2 p.m.

Ray Tanguay is president of Toyota Motor Manufacturing Canada Inc. (TMMC). He joined TMMC in 1991 and quickly advanced, becoming the first Canadian president of TMMC in 2002 and chairman in 2010. Under his direction, TMMC became the first plant outside of Japan to build Lexus vehicles and has won nine J.D. Power and Associates awards, including a Platinum Plant Quality Award in 2011, the first time the honour has been awarded to a Toyota plant outside of Japan. Tanguay serves on Laurier's School of Business & Economics Dean's Advisory Council. He will receive an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree Friday, June 15 at the morning ceremony at the Laurier Athletic Complex on the Waterloo campus starting at 9:30 a.m.

Sean Conway is the former Liberal MPP for Renfrew North. He received his BA in history from Wilfrid Laurier University and his MA in history from Queen's University. He was elected to the Ontario Legislature at the age of 24 and held his seat for 28 years, serving in a number of cabinet roles, including Minister of Education, Minister of Mines, Minister of Skills Development, and Colleges and Universities, and Government House Leader. Today, Conway is a public policy advisor for Gowlings law firm. He is also a Fellow at Queen's University's School of Policy Studies and serves as acting vice-principal of advancement at Queen's University. Conway received the Churchill Society Award for Excellence in the Cause of Parliamentary Democracy in 2007. He will receive an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree Friday, June 15 at the afternoon ceremony at the Laurier Athletic Complex on the Waterloo campus, starting at 2 p.m.

(more)

Order of Wilfrid Laurier University

The Order of Wilfrid Laurier recognizes exemplary and distinguished service to the university by members of the Laurier community.

Recipients:

Herb Epp, a former MPP and mayor of Waterloo who attended Laurier when it was known as Waterloo College, will accept his award June 14 at the 9:30 a.m. ceremony at the Laurier Athletic Complex on the Waterloo campus.

Beverly Harris, a former chair of Laurier's Board of Governors and a long-serving member of the board, will accept her award June 14 at the 2 p.m. ceremony at the Laurier Athletic Complex on the Waterloo campus.

For more information on Laurier's spring convocation ceremonies, please visit www.wlu.ca/convocation.