Madam Chancellor, I present to you Geraldine Kenney-Wallace, one of Canada's premier researchers and a passionate advocate for the advancement of science and technology. A formidable opponent of parochial habits, Dr. Kenney-Wallace challenges our governors, our educators and our industrial leaders to embrace the spirit of discovery needed for Canada's prosperity in an increasingly complex and competitive world. With diplomatic skill shaped by conviction and good humour, she uses her office as Chairman of the Science Council of Canada to join industry and research in mutually beneficial partnership.

A native of London, England, Dr. Kenney-Wallace was educated at Oxford, London and the University of British Columbia. A Professor of Chemistry and a Professor of Physics at the University of Toronto since 1980, her scholarly career has been illustrious — she has authored over 90 research publications and is credited as an international authority on lasers and optoelectronics. Recognized for her outstanding contributions in basic science that have helped shift the frontiers of modern technology, Geraldine Kenney-Wallace counts among her many honours the 1979 Corday Morgan medal and prize from the Royal Society of Chemistry in England, the 1983 E.W.R. Steacie Fellowship and a 1983 Guggenheim Fellowship. She also holds six honorary degrees and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada.

In constructing the house of science and technology, there are many carpenters but few visionary architects. Such a one is Dr. Kenney-Wallace. Her commitment to the public interest is legion wherever science and technology touch our lives: policy development, education, the environment, academic collaboration with industry — all command her attention and benefit from her guiding intelligence.

As Chairman of the Science Council of Canada and as a member of the Prime Minister's National Advisory Board on Science and Technology and the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, she travels the world as if it were her immediate neighbourhood. Moving theory into practice is her recurring theme, demonstrated most recently through her active membership on the National Advisory Committee for the federal Networks of Excellence research initiative and the Canadian International Development Agency's Centres of Excellence program.

Excellence is a word in risk of being diminished through overuse but no other so precisely captures the quality of Dr. Kenney-Wallace's service to education, science and technology in Canada. Her service is about to be applied to new undertakings, as next month she becomes President and Vice-Chancellor of McMaster University. Madam Chancellor, on behalf of the Senate of this University, it is a special privilege for me to present Dr. Geraldine Kenney-Wallace for the Degree of Doctor of Laws, honoris causa.