It is my great privilege, Madam Chancellor, to present to you Aimee August, tradition-bearer, teacher and Shuswap elder. Respected advisor in her home community of Neskonlith, Aimee August passes on the knowledge of her people to the present generation; her gift, the treasure of heritage revealed and lineage explained.

When power moves, it moves in a circle from childhood to childhood. Aimee August's childhood was unique among native children of her generation, many spending their formative years at residential schools. Believed incurably ill, Aimee returned to Neskonlith at age eleven where family medicine cured her and the tribal elders undertook her education. Unable to pass information to their own children and grandchildren, she was taught the stories, genealogies, medicines, and songs of her people. Daughter, sister and wife of chiefs, Aimee August was shown the path walked by generations past and her wisdom's light now guides the way for those who choose to follow.

It is with glad irony that a woman wise in learning gained through traditional oral teaching is consulted widely by anthropologists, ethnobotanists, historians, musicologists and linguists from academe. Accomplished in reading and writing her own language, her fluency in three other native languages has contributed enormously to the linguistic and ethnographic knowledge of Interior First Nations. With academic researchers and the British Columbia Indian Language Project, she compiled the first Shuswap language-learning kit for the local community. She has also edited and translated her own stories and those of the Shuswap people, opening once again a passage to greater understanding. Currently recording her life story for an autobiography to be published in book form, she continues to support a joint cultural project involving the Shuswap Tribal Council and Simon Fraser University.

Aimee August's legacy of knowledge and experience will shape generations to come. In honouring her today, we honour the culture from which her wisdom derives and honour also the other elders of her people who nurture and preserve past teachings. It is a privilege for Simon Fraser University to lend its name to her honour. Madam Chancellor, in the name of the Senate of this University, I present Aimee August for the Degree of Doctor of Laws, honoris causa.