Mr. Chancellor, one of the great pleasures afforded a university president is to introduce a graduate who has not only distinguished himself in his chosen field but also brought great credit to his university. Mr. Tong Kooi Ong has done both admirably.

Tong Kooi Ong attended Simon Fraser University as an international student, earning a B.A. in business administration and a Master’s degree in Economics. Upon returning to Malaysia, he began his rapid ascendancy in the corporate world, holding positions with such global corporations as Olivetti and Morgan Grenfell Asia Ltd., where he quickly established himself as a bold and creative thinker.

A fiercely independent man, he struck out on his own with Phileo Peregrine Securities, and a few years later became the majority shareholder of Phileo Allied. In a stroke of brilliant foresight, he built his company into a major banking and brokerage firm by introducing personal computer-based electronic banking to Malaysia. So successful was this venture that within ten short years of graduation from SFU, he had become known as one of the most influential figures in Malaysia’s corporate sector. But this resourceful entrepreneur—who just a few years earlier was also one of our most promising young business students—decided to chart new frontiers. After selling his majority share in Phileo Allied, he founded Financialzoo.com, a company that is developing innovative Internet investment and trading strategies and promoting leading-edge ideas such as the “virtual merger” of the Asian banking community. In addition to his interests in financial services, Tong Kooi Ong has become a major figure in Asian business journalism. His English language newspaper is now the highest circulation business publication in Malaysia, and he is establishing similar media operations in Singapore and China.

Tong Kooi Ong’s courageous leadership has placed him in the front ranks of international business innovators. His interests, however, are broad and include post-secondary education. Now that he is a permanent resident here, he has strengthened even further his ties to SFU, and we are the beneficiaries of his many talents. An advocate of higher education, and innovative business education for entrepreneurs and managers, he brings his vast experience and insight as a member of our Management of Technology MBA Council, and as a member also of the Council in charge of fundraising for the new Segal School of Graduate Management Studies. In the fall of 2001, he generously established the Tong Prizes in Entrepreneurship at SFU and he has graciously lent his support to one of our latest initiatives, the New Ventures Business Plan Competition.

Tong Kooi Ong is a corporate leader whose vision encompasses the globe and who inspires and nurtures the next generation of entrepreneurs. Mr. Chancellor, on behalf of the Senate of this University, and in recognition of his outstanding achievements, I ask that you now confer upon Mr. Tong Kooi Ong the degree Doctor of Laws, honoris causa.