Mr. Chancellor, I am honoured to present Robert Carkner, a distinguished educator whose remarkable achievements as teacher, administrator, and humanitarian have enriched the lives of thousands of people both here and abroad.

Born in Vancouver and educated at The University of British Columbia and Western Washington University, Robert Carkner began his career as a teacher in 1959. From the start, he believed in striving to help each student develop intellectually, physically, socially, and spiritually. When in 1973 he became a principal, until his retirement in 1994, Robert Carkner made this philosophy the cornerstone of his approach to administration.

During his 21 years as a principal in several Richmond high schools, he was the driving force behind many unique initiatives including the academically challenging Advanced Placement Program, the Science and Technology Awareness Program, and the Steveston Salmon Hatchery. He established Leadership Conferences intended to encourage learning by giving students every opportunity to excel. Believing profoundly in the importance of history, he put his creative energies into designing a widely emulated multi-media Remembrance Day ceremony that instills in students a deep appreciation for the human sacrifices made to preserve freedom.

Robert Carkner's vision, however, has always extended far beyond the immediate community. He initiated global outreach projects that make students sensitive to the inequalities in other parts of the world, such as Central America and Asia. He was the impetus behind the Casa Guatemala Orphanage project, an annual school district and community work endeavour that encourages students and staff from Richmond's senior high schools to fund raise and then travel to the orphanage to work there during spring break. He started a similar project for the Lai Thieu Centre for the Deaf in Vietnam, with students playing a major role in purchasing playground equipment and then traveling to Vietnam to set it up. Recognizing the importance of the Pacific Rim to British Columbia, he established an extensive student-exchange program with Japan.

From the beginning of his career until today, Robert Carkner has exemplified the educator as leader. In recognition of his many contributions to education and society, he was named a Paul Harris Fellow by Rotary International. The Steveston High Alumni Association dedicated the Bob Carkner Global Education Foundation in his honour, and he received the Richmond Alumni Association Award for outstanding leadership in Global and Space Education.

Mr. Chancellor, Robert Carkner has worked passionately on behalf of others, secure in his faith in the power of learning to improve communities for humankind. In return he has earned the respect and affection of thousands of British Columbians. On behalf of the Senate of Simon Fraser University, I am very pleased to present Robert Carkner for the degree Doctor of Laws, honoris causa.