Sophie Pierre, is one of our country’s most accomplished and lauded Aboriginal leaders. With a powerful combination of vision, grit and generous spirit, she has worked to strengthen not only her own beloved Ktunaxa Nation, but to advance the entire national discourse around Indigenous rights and reconciliation.

Born Sophie Mae Eustace in 1950, to the St. Mary’s band near Cranbrook, BC, Ms. Pierre attended the Kootenay Indian Residential School at the St. Eugene Mission. After completing high school, she moved to Vancouver Island with her two children to earn a business administration diploma from Camosun College, eventually returning home to work in band administration.

She went on to serve her band for 30 years—26 of them as elected Chief—during which time she was instrumental in transforming her childhood school into the St. Eugene Mission Resort. Featuring a four-star hotel, golf course and casino, this multi-million-dollar driver of economic growth—once a reminder of a painful past—is now a source of pride and independence to the Ktunaxa nation.

Ms. Pierre has led and served on numerous boards and industry committees relating to economic development, First Nations treaties, and Aboriginal education. In 2009, that broad experience and deep expertise was recognized with her appointment as chief commissioner of the British Columbia Treaty Commission, a role she held for six years.

*BC Business* magazine has named Sophie Pierre one of this province’s 50 most influential women. Her long career of service also earned her membership in the Order of British Columbia and the Order of Canada, along with two honorary degrees and a long list of awards for business acumen and leadership in mentoring young Aboriginal leaders. Appointed a Trudeau Foundation mentor in 2017, the mother of three children and grandmother of five today remains actively engaged with her own community as an elder advisor.

In recognition of her visionary leadership and lifetime commitment to First Nations’ cultural reclamation and economic development, Sophie Pierre is conferred a degree Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*. 