

Monday, May 27, 2024

Five new honorary doctorate recipients announced at MacEwan University

Edmonton – Anne McLellan, Annemarie Leenhouts-Petrov, Dr. Austin Albert Mardon, Dr. Ruth Collins-Nakai and Dr. Shane O’Dea will each be awarded a Doctor of the University, *honoris causa*, and speak to the graduating class.

“I am thrilled to welcome this diverse group of honorary doctorate recipients into the MacEwan family,” says Dr. Annette Trimbee, president and vice-chancellor. “Whether through science, law, the arts or academia, their contributions to their communities are outstanding and deserve our respect and admiration. MacEwan’s strategic vision, [Teaching Greatness](#), points out that we should all strive to be trendsetters and trendbreakers - a fitting description for our newest honorary doctorate recipients.”

[MacEwan University’s spring convocation ceremonies](#) will be held at Edmonton’s Winspear Centre from June 18 to 20, 2024.

Meet the recipients



Honourable A. Anne McLellan, P.C., O.C., A.O.E. served four terms as the Liberal MP for Edmonton Centre, during which she was deputy prime minister of Canada and minister of public safety and emergency preparedness; minister of health; minister of justice and attorney general of Canada; and minister of natural resources.

From May 2015 to 2020, McLellan was Dalhousie University’s seventh chancellor. From 1980 to 1992, she was a professor in the University of Alberta’s faculty of law and served as both associate dean and acting dean of the faculty.

McLellan is vice-chair of Invest Alberta Corporation, chair of the TELUS Edmonton Community Board and serves on the boards for the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research and the Institute of

Corporate Directors. She is also co-chair of the Coalition for a Better Future, a diverse group of over 140 organizations working together to focus on sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

In 2022, McLellan was appointed honorary lieutenant-colonel for the 41 Combat Engineer Regiment (41 CER), a reserve unit of the 41 Canadian Brigade-Group (41 CBG).

Anne McLellan will receive an honorary doctor of the university degree on June 20 at 9:30 a.m.



Annemarie Leenhouts-Petrov is the president and CEO of the Winspear Centre, one of Canada's premier concert venues, the home of the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra and a focal point of music in Northern Alberta.

Leenhouts-Petrov pursued a performance career in Europe before joining Symphony New Brunswick as general manager. She also held posts with the National Arts Centre and Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra.

Throughout her career, Leenhouts-Petrov focused on advancing the important impact that live music has on our communities. Since 2008, she has led the Winspear Centre, working to create a state-of-the-art centre for music where everyone is welcome, harnessing the power of music to build community and satisfy humanity's search for meaning.

Leenhouts-Petrov currently serves on the boards of directors of the lieutenant governor of Alberta Arts Awards, the Edmonton International Airports Business Advisory Committee and is the incoming chair of the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce. She is a founding member of the Edmonton Chapter of the International Women's Forum and a recipient of both the Rozsa Innovation Award and the national Betty Webster Award.

Annemarie Leenhouts-Petrov will receive an honorary doctor of the university degree on June 20 at 2:30 p.m.



Dr. Austin Albert Mardon, Ph.D., CM, KCSS, FRSC, FRCGS, is a distinguished Canadian author, researcher and academic who has been recognized for his significant contributions across multiple disciplines, including geography, astronomy and medicine.

His scholarly work includes over 360 papers and 200 books. Mardon's early adventures include a notable expedition to Antarctica, where he contributed to meteorite recovery efforts.

Beyond academia, Mardon is a fervent advocate for mental health who draws from his personal experiences to support others. He has been recognized with numerous awards for his advocacy work, including the Order of Canada and the CMA Medal of Honour.

Currently, he serves as an associate adjunct professor in the Department of Psychiatry and the John Dossetor Health Ethics Centre at the University of Alberta and as an assistant adjunct professor in the Department of Neurosciences at the University of Lethbridge.

Dr. Austin Albert Mardon will receive an honorary doctor of the university degree on June 19 at 2:30 p.m.



Dr. Ruth Collins-Nakai CM, MD, MBA, FRCPC, MACC, FCCS, ICD.D, DSc (Hon), is a pediatric and adult congenital cardiologist. She has been a faculty member at the University of Alberta from 1977 to 2000 in various academic positions, including as associate dean of Medicine and Dentistry.

Dr. Collins-Nakai established the Heritage Pediatric Cardiology Program, the precursor to the congenital heart program at the University of Alberta.

The recipient of many awards, Dr. Collins-Nakai has also held distinguished roles including president of the Canadian Cardiovascular Society and commissioner on the Premier's Commission on Future Health Care for Albertans. She was also the first woman to hold a number of prominent positions, including president of the Alberta Medical Association, chair of the board of governors of the American College of Cardiology and president of the Canadian Medical Association. She was appointed as a Member of the Order of Canada in December 2016 and was an Honorary Colonel with 1 Field Ambulance, Canadian Forces until December 2023.

Though she no longer does clinical work, she serves on several biotechnology and philanthropic boards.

Dr. Ruth Collins-Nakai will receive an honorary doctor of the university degree on June 19 at 9:30 a.m.



Dr. Shane O'Dea taught English at Memorial University for 50 years. While his background is in Victorian literature, his research area expanded to include architectural history, a subject he taught in the university's Faculty of Engineering for over 10 years.

Dr. O'Dea has published extensively on Newfoundland architecture and has been recognized for his teaching in a number of prestigious awards: Memorial University's first Distinguished Teaching Award, Canadian Professor of the Year and a 3M Teaching Fellowship.

A leader in preservation activity in Newfoundland, Dr. O'Dea was president of the Newfoundland Historic Trust, as well as a founder and chair of the Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage Foundation. He has served on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada and on the board of governors of Heritage Canada of which he was chair from 1996 to 1998.

From 1995 to 2018, Dr. O'Dea was Memorial University's public orator and presented more than 100 candidates for honorary degrees. In 2005, he was inducted into the Order of Newfoundland and Labrador and, in 2016, into the Order of Canada. In 2022, Memorial University conferred on him the LLD (*honoris causa*).

Dr. Shane O'Dea will receive an honorary doctor of the university degree on June 18 at 9:30 a.m.

For more information, please contact archerj24@macewan.ca

Founded in 1971, MacEwan University inspires its students with a powerful combination of academic excellence and personal learning experiences. Offering more than 90 programs including undergraduate degrees, applied degrees, diplomas, certificates, continuing education and corporate training, the university provides a transformative education in a creative, collaborative and supportive learning environment where creativity and innovation thrive. Located in Edmonton, Alberta Canada, MacEwan University offers a unique student experience that opens up diverse pathways for achievement and growth.