November 5, 2009

**GRANT MACEWAN UNIVERSITY CONFERNS ITS FIRST HONORARY DEGREE**

Edmonton — The Right Honourable Donald Mazankowski will receive Grant MacEwan University’s first Distinguished Citizen Honorary Bachelor of Arts degree for his important role in shaping Canada’s modern history.

Born and raised in Viking, Alberta, Mr. Mazankowski has always held a passion for rural life and a deep understanding of the economic and political challenges facing western Canada.

While owning and operating an automotive business with his brother Ray in the early 60s, Mr. Mazankowski began working behind the scenes in local politics. Five years later, he was elected a Member of Parliament for Vegreville, a constituency he held for 25 years.

Over his political career, Mr. Mazankowski was minister of several portfolios, including Transport; Privatization and Regulatory Affairs; Agriculture; and Finance. He was appointed Deputy Prime Minister and Government House Leader in 1986, a post he held until his retirement from federal politics in 1993. Nicknamed the "Minister of Everything", he contributed to a legacy of programs and policies that include the Farm Income Protection Act, the North American Free Trade Agreement and the Western Diversification Program.

Since retiring, he has continued to chair boards in support of health initiatives and support post-secondary through board work and fundraising efforts. In 1985, he established the Don Mazankowski Scholarship Foundation, which has distributed more than $250,000 to some 150 youths from across Canada.

In 2000, Mr. Mazankowski was named an Officer of the Order of Canada. He has also received an Honorary Doctor of Engineering from the Technical University of Nova Scotia and an Honorary Doctor of Laws from the University of Alberta. In July 2002, he was named a Paul Harris Fellow by Rotary International. And in 2003, he received Alberta’s highest honor, the Alberta Order of Excellence.

Mr. Mazankowski will receive his Distinguished Citizen Honorary Bachelor of Arts degree at MacEwan’s Fall Convocation, on Monday, November 9 at 7:00 p.m., in the Winspear Centre.

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