June 12, 2014

Boys and girls advocate honoured as a Distinguished Citizen

Edmonton—The Board of Governors at MacEwan University is pleased to announce that Liz O’Neill has been recognized as a Distinguished Citizen. For over 30 years, O’Neill has devoted her life to serving children and youth.

O’Neill is the executive director of Boys and Girls Clubs Big Brothers Big Sisters of Edmonton and Area, an agency that serves over 5,000 children and youth, has over 3,000 volunteers, employs 100 staff members, and operates with a budget of nearly $7 million.

In 1979, O’Neill became the executive director of the Big Sisters of Edmonton; at that time the agency served 50 children and had a budget of $60,000. When the agency joined with Big Brothers in 1991, O’Neill became the executive director. In 2011, the agency merged with Boys and Girls Clubs of Edmonton.

O’Neill’s involvement on boards includes her current position as deputy chair of the Edmonton Community Foundation Board, membership on both the EPCOR Community Essentials Council and the TELUS Edmonton Community Foundation Board, and as co-chair of the Alberta Mentoring Partnership.

In 2010, MacEwan University named O’Neill the Dr. Charles Allard Chair in Business, making her the first person in the position to be honoured for leadership in the non-profit sector. She was inducted into the City of Edmonton Salute to Excellence Community Service Hall of Fame in 2012. O’Neill has also been recognized with the YWCA Women of Distinction Award in Social Services; Global TV's Woman of Vision; the Government of Canada 125th Anniversary Medal for Community Service; and the Alberta Centennial Medal for Community.

About the award

The Board of Governors at MacEwan University recognizes an individual or group as a “Distinguished Citizen” through the awarding of a honourary baccalaureate degree at its convocation ceremonies. O’Neil will receive her honourary baccalaureate at the Spring Convocation ceremonies.

When: Wednesday, June 18
Where: Francis Winspear Centre for Music
Time: 10:00 a.m.

Founded in 1971, MacEwan University inspires its students with a powerful combination of academic excellence and personal learning experiences. Offering more than 65 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.

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