



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Honorary Degree Citations The degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*, conferred on Dr. Grant-John Friday, October 7, 2011

Madam Chancellor, Aboriginal peoples have long recognized education as a tool for empowerment, transformation, and self-determination. Our people are leaders committed to social change, with a responsibility to understand and respect self, culture and community—and to pass that wisdom on.

Wendy Grant-John lives these values everyday. A member of the Musqueam First Nation, she is an inspired leader who has helped bring transformative change to Indigenous communities across this country, while simultaneously helping to build stronger relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples.

Grounded in her culture and guided by the teachings of her Salish ancestors, Mrs. Grant-John has served three times as Chief of the Musqueam First Nation. A passionate advocate for Aboriginal culture, she has played a key role in revitalizing the Musqueam weaving tradition; helped found the Aboriginal Healing Commission; and established the first Aboriginal commercial fishery in Canada. She continues to be involved in many government and community committees and programs, including the Big Sister's Mentoring Program for First Nations women.

In 2006, Mrs. Grant-John received the National Aboriginal Achievement Award in recognition of her leadership and contributions to the economic, cultural, political, and social development of the Musqueam Nation. Among her many achievements, perhaps the most important is her commitment to passing on the teachings of her people to her grandchildren so "now they know."

And so now we too know, that this incredible woman has not only worked tirelessly to empower Aboriginal Canadians, but through her social actions continues to make Canada a better place for all of us. Her life offers lessons for every Canadian. We enrich our relationships with family and community when we take pride in our own unique cultural heritage. And we have a duty to live our lives well by giving back to the communities of which we are members.

Madam Chancellor, I ask on behalf of the Senate of this university that you confer upon Wendy Grant-John the degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*.