

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
FALL CONVOCATION
October 8, 2021

Convocation Address
By Dr. Herb (Jay) James

The degree of Doctor of Law, honoris causa, was conferred on Dr. Herb (Jay) James during the Faculty of Applied Sciences ceremony on Friday, October 8, 2021. The following is Dr. James's Convocation address:

Well, this is amazing for me to be up here. I'm a chartered student, 1965, that's a long time ago and I, we had a thousand students in that year and I see we have four or five thousand out here, just this year!

So, the ripple effects of self-esteem, taking steps yourself, to love yourself, and remove negative thoughts. And most important, if you, you'll find that you'll have an improvement in your life and your longevity and things will fit together a little better.

Did you know that we have six thousand thoughts in our head every day according to a study two years ago at Queen's University in Kingston. Imagine that now, six thousand thoughts a day; could be good, bad, or otherwise.

So,

Long story short, I had bilateral ear surgery, stapedectomies for otosclerosis. It took about two weeks. The doctor and myself, we got to know each other pretty well. The surgeries were successful. I threw away my hearing aids. The doctor became my mentor and suggested that at a young age, that I'd gone through all of this that maybe I could do something in the future to help the deaf and hearing impaired.

Well I came home to Vancouver and the Okanagan and started to live my new life. I developed a career in the insurance industry and married a lovely lady that was a career banker. And as the years went by, of course, I'm going to mention 1965 again, as a chartered student, but I was kind of nervous. I was age 29. I was an adult student, first year. How about that. Really amazing. So I was a little nervous going to class and I'd always get there early. And some of the students would think I was a prof. or a TA. And I said no, no, no, I'm really not! Then they thought maybe I was a spy or something you know, but anyway, it worked out really well.

As the years went by, 1967, I decided to set up a non-profit society; International Sound Foundation to try and do some good. And for the first few years, we did a lot of good! We set up a hearing dog program and a Surgical Buddy program. And we also helped the B.C. Ear Bank, that people could sign and donate their temporal bones for ear research. And we helped out on that and I started to get to know a few local Fijian Citizens, Canadians and we talked about things and they said to me there are no ear surgeons in Fiji, can you do anything about it?

So, I talked to some of the local doctors and my own ear doctors, ENT's, they're called ear, nose, throat and they said that probably if things could work out then they might volunteer their time. So, I went to Fiji and I have to tell you that the jet from Vancouver left at 12 noon on a Friday. It's 15,000 miles away, in about 15 hours, and landed in Suva, the capital in Fiji about 8 or 9 o'clock Saturday night. And the next morning, I met with local doctors, worked with them, and told them all about the program.

And then the next day, I met with the Ministry of Health. And they were quite excited. I said to them, there's no charge, no charge; all-volunteer doctors from Canada. And they

The ripple effect of doing good. And all those thousands that can hear again and I'm so grateful for this opportunity to share this with you and just state that this is the ripple effect and it can be for you also! I'm going to leave you with simply do things now and not tomorrow and love yourself and never give up! Thank you.