

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Honorary Degree Citation The degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*, conferred on Dr. Tamara Vrooman Friday, October 7, 2016

Madam Chancellor, I am proud to present Tamara Vrooman, a transformational leader renowned for her commitment to addressing economic inequalities, advancing social justice and supporting a healthy and informed community.

An innovative and collaborative leader, she achieved significant success as BC's Deputy Minister in both the Ministries of Finance and of Health, as Secretary to the Treasury Board and as CEO of the Public Sector Employees Council, by age 35.

As President and CEO of Vancity, since 2007, she has drawn on her rich public policy experience and leadership of one of Canada's largest cooperative financial institutions to tackle tough issues in the community, including poverty, environmental sustainability and the need to build a fair global banking system that works for all, not just the privileged.

Under her leadership, Vancity has introduced targeted initiatives to address the economic marginalization of Aboriginal peoples and communities. In the face of the very high interest rates charged by payday loan companies, the financial cooperative led the way in delivering an alternative. In addition, Vancity became the first carbon - neutral financial institution in North America, the largest private -sector living wage employer in Canada and the first Canadian financial institution to join the Global Alliance for Banking on Values.

All of this was achieved with Tamara at the helm, while growing the assets of the credit union 41 per cent to \$19.8 billion and achieving the highest profits in the organization's 70-year history—proving that businesses can create social, environmental and financial outcomes at the same time.

Her dedication to building a banking system that supports a moral economy has even earned her the attention of the world's foremost spiritual leaders. When the Vatican convened its Summit on The Global Common Good: Towards a More Inclusive Economy, Pope Francis asked Tamara Vrooman to attend and share her insights. Later at the 2014 Heart-Mind Summit in Vancouver, she had a similar audience with the Dalai Lama.

Tamara Vrooman continues to advance public education on these and other issues of community concern through the Vancity Office of Community Engagement and the annual Vancity - sponsored SFU Public Square Community Summit. Together these have expanded the scope, reach and quality of their programming and engaged the broader community in enriching civic dialogue.

In recognition of her work, awards she has received include the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal for Outstanding