



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Honorary Degree Citation
The degree of Doctor of Laws , honoris causa,
conferred on Dr. Lorna Wanosts'a7 Williams
Friday , October 7, 2016

Madam Chancellor, I am honoured to present Lorna Wanosts'a7 Williams, a distinguished Indigenous scholar, educator and linguist who has contributed significantly to the advancement of learning and literacy in Indigenous communities and has been instrumental in preserving and reanimating Indigenous languages in BC, and around the world.

As the Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Knowledge and Learning at the University of Victoria for seven years, she led crucial research, developed ground breaking inclusive curricula, taught and mentored hundreds of students and faculty, and delivered presentations to a wide range of national and international audiences. Dr. Williams' work in language revitalization and indigenous ways of knowing has spanned the major continents of the world.

A much valued member of the Lil'wat First Nation, Dr. Williams, a Residential School Survivor, started her education career as a grade school teacher in Mount Currie, BC. Later, as Director of the Curriculum Development and Cultural Centre for the Ts'zil Board of Education in Mount Currie, she supported and created innovative work on cultural curriculum for the Lil'wat language.

For 14 years, this SFU alumna who earned a Bachelor of General and Community Studies degree and teaching certificate from Simon Fraser University, was a First Nations Education Specialist at the Vancouver School Board. She trained teachers, psychologists, speech language pathologists and counsellors in the Feuerstein Instrumental Enrichment pedagogical methods and assessment tools, developed for use in communities suffering from the legacies of historical trauma. Dr. Williams' inspirational leadership opened the minds and hearts of students and educators of all backgrounds to the enormous riches of First Nations culture and wisdom.

The UVic Professor Emerita, with a doctorate in education from the University of Tennessee, has served as the Director of the Aboriginal Education Enhancements Branch in BC, was Chair of the First Peoples Culture Council, an organization devoted to Indigenous language revitalization, and is currently Chair of Salishan Institute and President of Fel Canada and a Council member of the Minister's Council on Aboriginal Women.

She has received many accolades, including a Gemini Award for The Mind of the Child a documentary about her work in understanding and educating aboriginal children in inner city schools. This respected community activist is also a recipient of the Queen's Golden Jubilee Award and the Order of British Columbia.

Madam Chancellor, on behalf of the Senate of this University, I ask that you now confer upon Lorna Wanosts'a7 Williams, the degree of Doctor of Laws, honoris causa.