



Madam Chancellor, it is my honour to present Herb (Jay) James, a charter student of Simon Fraser University who for more than half a century has helped transform the lives of Deaf and hard of hearing children around the world.

Born in Trail in 1936 and raised in Vernon, B.C., Mr. James became almost completely deaf while still a teenager. Ever resilient and resourceful, he followed a tip about an experimental inner ear surgery that was being performed in Sweden. At 19, he travelled to Stockholm where his life was forever transformed. His hearing was restored without cost—a gift from Dr. Lennart Holmgren, the doctor who treated him—and Mr. James returned home, filled with gratitude and purpose.

A few years later, Mr. James was reading an article in Reader's Digest about a new audio testing device for children—it measured auditory acuity with birdsong. He decided to purchase one of the costly units to lend to local pre-schools and elementary schools to help them screen for hearing loss in children—a practice now universal in Canada.

In 1967, Mr. James founded a charity, and over the following decades, his International Sound Foundation has grown to serve a global need. Its Better Hearing-Better Life program has improved the lives of thousands of children in 10 developing countries by delivering proper screening and free medical treatment, including procedures by volunteer ear surgeons. Today, the foundation also collects and refurbishes operational hearing aids for redistribution to those in need.

His commitment to the greater good extends well beyond his own family and foundation: Mr. James is a long  
behalf of all the children he has helped in B.C. and around the world, I ask that you now confer upon Herb James, the degree of Doctor of Laws, honoris causa.