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University of Lethbridge confirms 2013 Honorary Degree Recipients

The University of Lethbridge Senate has confirmed a diverse and distinguished group of five persons as recipients of Honorary Degrees for 2013.

From the sporting field to the boardroom, the concert hall and the halls of parliament and justice, the group represents a cross section of the local, national and international community:

- **Garald (Gary) Bowie** -- Community volunteer, educator, passionate advocate for sport and poverty reduction (Lethbridge, AB)
- **Richard (Rick) Casson** -- Veteran politician and southern Alberta community volunteer (Picture Butte and Lethbridge, AB)
- **Rivka Golani** -- Internationally-respected musician, educator and founder of the Fort Macleod International Festival (United Kingdom and Fort Macleod, AB)
- **Robert (Bob) Turner** -- Chair Emeritus of the University of Lethbridge Board of Governors (Edmonton, AB)
- **Neil Wittmann** -- Chief Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench in the Province of Alberta and former Lethbridge resident (Calgary, AB)

"The University of Lethbridge is very pleased that these individuals have agreed to let us recognize them with an Honorary Degree," says University of Lethbridge Chancellor, Dr. Shirley McClellan.

"Their collective accomplishments have made our local, provincial, national and international communities stronger and have improved the quality of life for people around the world."

The recipients will receive their degrees at the Spring 2013 and Fall 2013 Convocation Ceremonies.

Following are brief biographies (in alphabetical order) of this year's honoured recipients.

Dr. Garald (Gary) W. Bowie

A founding faculty member of the University of Lethbridge, Dr. Gary Bowie is a noted community volunteer, builder, leader and educator. Dr. Bowie taught and developed courses in physical education and kinesiology at the University over the course of a 30-year career (1968-1998) and played a major role in the construction of the 1st Choice Savings Centre for Sport and Wellness.

A former Pronghorns basketball coach and Chair of the Department of Physical Education, Dr. Bowie was also active in his community, serving as the Director of Sports for the 1975 Canada Winter Games and Chair of both the Alberta Winter and Summer Games. A co-founder and Chair of the Lethbridge Sports Hall of Fame, Dr. Bowie is also a hall inductee.

As an educator, Dr. Bowie served 15 years as a trustee on the Lethbridge School District #51 Board, and his volunteer activities have long served the local and provincial homeless populations. He was recently appointed Chair of the Alberta Secretariat for Action on Homelessness and continues to influence his community in positive ways.

Richard (Rick) Casson

The former Manager of University of Lethbridge Printing Services, Rick Casson has served the University, his home community of Picture Butte, the people of southern Alberta and Canada as a whole over the course of his 30-plus year political career. Casson began his community service as a volunteer firefighter before being convinced to run for local political office, eventually serving as a municipal councilor for nine years and then as Mayor of Picture Butte for an additional nine years.

Casson would spend 14 years as a sitting Member of Parliament and was both a successful and influential MP. He served as Chair of the Standing Committee on National Defense as well as Chair of the Special Committee on Afghanistan, all the while remaining true to his local roots and actively supporting the constituents of southern Alberta.

Named to the Queens Privy Council for Canada in 2010, Casson has also been a strong advocate for the support of Multiple Sclerosis research, raising \$122,000 through the MS Society over the last seven years.

Rivka Golani

A world-class musician, performer, teacher and promoter of classical music, Rivka Golani is among the top-five viola soloists in the world and a major contributor to the advancement of classical music in southern Alberta. Born in Tel Aviv, Israel, Golani moved to Canada in 1974, performing across the country and spreading the love of music to the communities that she visited.

When approached to teach master viola classes to students in southern Alberta, she enthusiastically shared her immense talent and quickly took up the charge to create an international music festival. The Fort Macleod International Festival was born and is now in its ninth year.

A dedicated and successful teacher, Golani is also a champion of southern Alberta

composers, giving young musicians the opportunity to showcase their talents and taking their works to national and international audiences. With more than 250 original works composed especially for her, Golani has brought the world of classical music to southern Alberta's doorstep.

Robert Turner

As Chair of the Board of Governors for the University of Lethbridge for six years (2006-2012), Robert Turner helped guide the University through an era of significant change and growth, including the creation of a new Strategic Plan, a successful fundraising campaign and a major expansion of campus services.

Turner, a successful attorney and businessman, was elected to the U of L's Board of Governors in 2002 and served four years as a key contributor to the creation of governance policies and practices, as well as the attached responsibilities of the Board, Administration and others.

When appointed Chair of the Board in 2006 and then reappointed for a second term in 2009, Turner recruited an outstanding group of Board members, ensuring gender balance, a Pan-Alberta membership and the skills necessary to run an emerging comprehensive university. Turner's extensive volunteer contributions reflect the values of the University of Lethbridge and continue to impact at the local, provincial and national level.

Neil Wittmann

Lethbridge Collegiate Institute graduate Neil Wittmann has long been respected as one of the top litigators in the province of Alberta, serving as an exceptional teacher and mentor to junior lawyers and erstwhile champion of ethical litigation. Now, as Chief Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench in the Province of Alberta, Wittmann conducts the majority of his work behind the scenes, continually working to better the practice of law in the province.

As Vice-Chair of the Judicial Conduct Committee of the Canadian Judicial Council (CJC), Wittmann's work is absolutely essential in ensuring that the independency of the judiciary is maintained in Canada and the conduct of the members of the judiciary adhere to the ethical principles adapted by the CJC.

Wittmann's stellar career as a lawyer in private practice, coupled with his excellence as a judge and now Chief Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench demonstrates the respect and admiration the legal community has for his contributions to the practice of law in Alberta and beyond.

The specific ceremony at which these individuals will receive their degree is unconfirmed at this time. Additional information will be released in May, prior to the Spring 2013 Convocation Ceremony.

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