



Tuesday 17th October 2017

Honorary Doctorate Conferring Ceremony

Dr. Martin Naughton, Sr. Stanislaus Kennedy, & President Bill Clinton

A Sheansiléir, a airí, a aíonna ghradamúla, a chomhleacaithe, agus a dhaoine uaisle, ba mhaith liom mo bhuíochas a ghabháil libh go léir as ucht teacht anseo inniú chun bheith páirteach ins an searmanas súntasach seo.

Chancellor, Ministers, Excellencies, distinguished guests, colleagues and special friends, on behalf of Dublin City University, I want to welcome you and to thank you for joining us today for this important ceremony for the university.

I also welcome the many students and staff in the audience – the demand for tickets from inside the university was incredible (I can't imagine why!). We are delighted that over 1000 people can be here with us in the Helix as we honour these special individuals.

Apart from hoping that I won't speak for too long, I am hoping that our audience has a great deal of sympathy for my place in the proceedings right now!

Yes, I do indeed feel like the very average choirboy coming on stage to **sing solo** after Pavarotti has performed ... and not only Pavarotti ... Kiri Te Kanawa, Placido Domingo and Jose Carreras as well!!

So, this average choirboy won't detain you for very long!

In its short history, DCU has not conferred many honorary doctorates.

Today, Sr. Stan, President Clinton, and Dr. Naughton, you join a short, but distinguished, list of our Honorary Graduates, a list that includes a number of Nobel Laureates:

ETS Walton, winner of the **Nobel Prize for Physics**, **Mother Teresa**, **John Hume**, **David Trimble**, and **Muhammad Yunus** each a winner of the **Nobel Peace Prize**, and our good friend, the late **Seamus Heaney**, winner of the **Nobel Prize for Literature**.

As President, I am often asked why DCU awards Honorary Doctorates.

A good question! Let me explain.

Ireland has no national honours system and so it is important that we can recognise and honour outstanding achievements.

The award of an Honorary Doctorate by DCU is **not only** a recognition of **outstanding achievements, of excellence** in a particular field of endeavour, but it is also a public statement of **the values** and priorities that this University cherishes.

In fact, it is the intersection of **excellence** and **shared values** that enable us to

identify suitable candidates to receive a DCU Honorary Degree.

We have listened to the wonderful tributes to each of our honorary graduates – tributes that have captured their outstanding achievements and their impact. Three amazing individuals -- their outstanding achievements are not in doubt. But there is a common thread between them. Each has a particular passion for Ireland and each has transformed its essential tapestry significantly for the better – in ways that matter hugely and **personally** to the individual citizen: jobs, homes and a peaceful society. Each, in his, **or her**, own way, is an **innovator**, a **creative** problem-solver.

Martin Naughton -- a Technology Innovator

Sr. Stan – a Social Innovator

President Clinton – an Innovator for Peace

Each has taken risks to advance a vision.

Each, in the words of Seamus Heaney, believes ***“that a further shore is reachable from here.”***

Each understands the incredible impact of **‘soft power’** in achieving change and **transformation**.

Again, in the words of Seamus Heaney in his translation of Beowulf, that ***“Behaviour that's admired is the path to power among people everywhere.”***

For a university that is renowned for **its** commitment to **innovation** and **its** mission to **transform lives** and societies in Ireland (and further afield), it is very clear that there is a particular resonance between the values and attributes of our honourees and those of the university. And, so, it is entirely appropriate that we have chosen these 3 individuals to honour in the best way we can today.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it has been my great privilege today, on behalf of DCU, to confer honorary doctorates on 3 outstanding people.

Sister Stan, Martin, President (Bill) Clinton, we are very happy to honour each of you but, in truth, it is we who are honoured by your presence here and by your acceptance of this award.

We are delighted to welcome each of you into the DCU Family.

Comhghairdeas agus cuirim fáilte romhaibh. Congratulations and Thank You!