



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Honorary Degree Citation
The degree of Doctor of Letters, *honoris causa*,
conferred on Dr. David Baines
Tuesday, June 10, 2014

Madam Chancellor, David Baines' unique combination of academic and practical training in finance coupled with his integrity, curiosity, intelligence and courage demonstrates how a determined individual can contribute to improvements in the quality and transparency of business for all Canadians.

Mr. Baines began his journalistic career after completing an Honours Bachelor of Arts in English Literature at Queen's University and a Master of Business Administration from the Richard Ivey School of Business at the University of Western Ontario.

After several years in the finance industry, Mr. Baines joined the *Vancouver Sun* as its securities columnist specializing in white-collar crime, in particular, securities fraud.

Averaging three columns a week for 25 years, Mr. Baines exposed immoral and illegal business conduct in hundreds of different situations. He focused not just on the perpetrators, but also on the regulatory environment that enabled their misdeeds, and the professionals who facilitated them. In many cases, his exposés led to civil and criminal prosecutions, and in some cases, to game-changing regulatory reforms.

Not surprisingly, his writing was not well received by people who found themselves at the investigative end of his pen.

BC Business magazine dubbed him "the most hated man in business."

He was physically threatened on several occasions. At one point, Vancouver police announced there was a contract on his life. He was sued for libel 20 times, not because he was reckless, but because he and the *Vancouver Sun* refused to be cowed by legal threats. On one occasion, he turned the tables and sued a group of promoters who accused him of trading against his column. He won what is by far the largest libel award in BC history.

Yet Mr. Baines never wavered from his purpose: to protect and promote the interests of ordinary investors.

For his efforts, he received many accolades, most notably four national newspaper awards (1989, 1998, 2000 and 2005), more than any other reporter or columnist in western Canada. He also won a national magazine award for best business article, and four Jack Webster awards for outstanding journalism in BC. Upon his retirement last year, the Jack Webster Foundation presented him with its lifetime achievement award, BC's most prestigious journalism award.

Author J.K. Rowling once opined that, "It takes a great deal of courage to stand up to your enemies, but a great deal more to stand up to your friends." Mr. Baines wrote without fear or favour. In so doing, he improved business transparency and operations and made investing safer and fairer for all Canadians. We are honoured to have him join us today.

Madam Chancellor, on behalf of the senate of this university, I ask that you now confer upon David Baines, the degree Doctor of Letters, *honoris causa*.