



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Honorary Degree Citation
The degree of Doctor of Science, *honoris causa*,
conferred on Sir Mason Durie
Thursday, October 9, 2014

Madam Chancellor, it is my privilege to present Professor Sir Mason Durie, eminent psychiatrist, scholar, and academic leader from New Zealand. For over 40 years he has been at the forefront of a transformational approach to Maori health challenges in his home country, and he has emerged as one of the world's foremost leaders in the field of indigenous health.

Sir Mason is a member of the Rangitane and Ngati Kauwhata (Maori) tribes. In his early career as a practicing psychiatrist he pioneered community mental health programs in New Zealand, with a particular focus on indigenous communities. He became an advocate for an integrated model of public health when his work in psychiatry led him to realize that mental health is a key component of overall health, and overall health is a function of the environment in which people live.

Sir Mason moved to academia in 1988 as Chair in Maori Studies at Massey University in New Zealand. In 2002 he was made Professor of Maori Research and Development and Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Maori and Pasifika), and in 2011 was appointed Deputy Vice-Chancellor. As an academic leader, he led the integration of Maori programming in one of New Zealand's leading universities. He has played a significant national role in Maori tertiary education and Maori health workforce development, and his scholarship on indigenous perspectives and research methods is widely used.

His recognition that Maori well-being encompasses mind, spirit, body and family in balance has influenced a generation of policymakers, politicians and, in turn, the education, health and social sectors. Maori health systems are emulated by indigenous communities around the globe and many recent Aboriginal health system innovations in Canada are modeled on the Maori approach.

During an exemplary career spanning over four decades, Professor Sir Mason Durie has earned the respect and admiration of his peers the world over. In addition to many other honours he has received, he was appointed a Knight Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit "for services to Maori health and public health services in particular."

We too take great pride in paying tribute to this exceptional individual. Madam Chancellor, on behalf of the Senate of this University, I ask that you now confer upon Professor Sir Mason Durie the degree, Doctor of Science, *honoris causa*.