

*Citation read on the occasion of the granting of the degree of  
Honorary Doctor of Laws to  
**David Holmes Black**  
by the Senate of the University of Victoria*

*June 10, 2014*

Mr. Chancellor, it is my privilege to introduce David Holmes Black, dedicated family man, media entrepreneur, philanthropist, and ‘authentic gentleman’; a veritable man for all seasons.

David Black is perhaps best known as the founder of Black Press, but he has always put family first. In that commitment, he combines passion, morality and unbounded enthusiasm for life, instilling through example his deep-seated ethic to better the world through service to others.

After earning an engineering degree from the University of British Columbia and a Masters in Business Administration from the University of Western Ontario, David learned the ropes of the newspaper industry with Torstar before buying from his father his first newspaper in 1975 at the age of 29. He bought his second four years later and subsequently grew Black Press into the largest private newspaper publisher in Canada with one hundred and seventy titles in BC, Alberta, Washington State, Hawaii, and Ohio, and employing more than three thousand people. David Black has been recognized by his peers regionally and nationally for exemplary leadership, entrepreneurial prowess, and business acumen.

I don’t know if David actually aspires to be an energy baron, but he recognizes our society’s continued reliance on oil, the importance of oil to the BC and Canadian economies, and the real dangers of shipping bitumen along BC’s coast. His proposal to build a \$32 billion dollar oil refinery in Kitimat seeks to balance economic, social, and environmental needs and concerns. At a time when most successful people would be content to enjoy the fruits of their labour, David Black continues to think of how he can contribute to the welfare of British Columbians and Canadians. He cares about his community, province, and country and does what he can to make them better.

David Black is known for making a difference. Among many initiatives and service commitments, David chaired the Northern BC Winter Games, and the bid team that brought the 1994 Commonwealth Games to Victoria. He has served as president of the BC & Yukon Newspaper Association, a governor of the Canadian Newspaper Association, chair of the BC Progress Board, and member of the BC Competition Council. He was also among the local business leaders who convinced the University of Victoria and the provincial government to establish our Business School—now known as the Peter B. Gustavson School of Business—and was the first Chair of the school’s Board of Advisors.

In addition to committing a lot of his time to the betterment of society, David Black has also been a quiet philanthropist, making a significant contribution to the BC Cancer Foundation and, as vice-chair of the 2009 campaign, helping that foundation to raise ten million dollars. The Peter B. Gustavson School of Business is also extremely grateful for David's generous annual donation of 37 five-thousand-dollar scholarships. These funds help students from all over the province realize their educational goals.

David Black's friends describe him as a true gentleman; brilliant, shrewd, and tenacious, but also compassionate, unpretentious, and unassuming. His competitors describe him as honest, principled, and ethical; a person of integrity, civility, and humility who brings out the best in others. David Black is, and has always been, guided by an internal compass set steady at "true north"—unwavering in its direction to bring out what is best *in* us and *for* us. He does not do the things that he does for fame or fortune but for the joy of living a purposeful life.

Mr. Chancellor, it is my honour to present David Holmes Black for the degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*.

Written and presented by  
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