

Wednesday 17 May 2017

Notre Dame University Vice Chancellor awarded honorary degree

The University of Notre Dame Australia's Vice Chancellor, Professor Celia Hammond, has received an honorary degree from The University of Portland in the USA.

The Doctor of Public Service *honoris causa* was conferred on Professor Hammond by Father Mark Poorman, President of the University of Portland, on 7 May 2017, for her "tireless commitment to advancing Catholic university education in Australia".

The University of Portland, a long standing international partner of Notre Dame, was established by the Congregation of the Holy Cross in 1901 in Portland, Oregon. It is currently home to more than 4000 students and over 1000 faculty and staff, and for the last 22 years has earned a top-10 ranking by *US News & World Report* in its annual list of best colleges in the United States.

Professor Hammond, Western Australia's longest serving university Vice Chancellor, was also invited to deliver the Commencement speech to nearly 1000 graduates and their families at the University's 2017 Commencement Ceremonies.

Professor Hammond commenced employment at Notre Dame's Fremantle School of Law in 1998. She was appointed the third Vice Chancellor of Notre Dame in 2008, and has overseen the rapid expansion of the University over the past 10 years including: the growth of the university's Sydney Campus; a near two-fold increase in student numbers to 11,000 nationally; the creation of leading national research institutes at each of Notre Dame's Campuses – in Fremantle, Broome and Sydney; and the integration of service-learning and real-world experience programs into each of the University's undergraduate degrees.

During her address to the graduates, Professor Hammond said that while she was delighted to be receiving the honour from the wonderful University of Portland, she also felt undeserving of the honour.

"I am an ordinary girl, born a long, long time ago in a land far, far away (otherwise known as the late 1960s in a small country town in Western Australia), who has been blessed beyond her desserts to be doing what I am doing, to be living as I am living, and to be here now with you all at this special time of your life," Professor Hammond said.

Professor Hammond told the graduates that one thing she had learnt over the years, is that to: "live a good and fulfilling life, to make a difference and to do good in the world, we do not need to do things which are big, grand or take place on a world stage. We do not need to be in a 'hall of fame' or huge on social media.

"We should direct our hopes, our dreams, our aspirations and our prayers to having the insight and openness to recognising our own uniqueness, our own gifts and talents, our calling, and our vocation in life, to try to live a life in which we use and develop what has been gifted to us for the betterment of the world in which we live," Professor Hammond said.



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During his citation, Thomas Greene, Provost of the University of Portland, said: “Celia looks upon this awesome responsibility as a blessing, a vocation and a true life calling that speaks volumes about the values and convictions and calm brilliance which drive her work.

“By believing in the power of faith and reason, by pursuing truth and ethics within a Catholic moral framework, and by cultivating an environment that encourages the growth and development of young men and women in all aspects of their life, she puts her own deep personal faith into action each and every day.”

To watch a video of Professor Celia Hammond’s Commencement address, please visit <https://www1.up.edu/commencement/live-stream.html>.

Ends

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Caption: Fr Mark Poorman and Professor Celia Hammond. Professor Hammond received the Doctor of Public Service *honoris causa* from The University of Portland. *Photo: The University of Portland*



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