

Citation: The Hon Gregory John Crafter AO

13 April 2010, 2:30pm

Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present to you The Hon Greg Crafter AO.

Mr Crafter is being admitted to the degree of Doctor of the University honoris causa for his distinguished creative contributions in the service of society.

Gregory John Crafter graduate from the University of Adelaide with a Bachelor of Laws degree in 1978. He was admitted as a legal practitioner of the Supreme Court of South Australia in the same year.

Mr Crafter was elected to state parliament as the member for Norwood in 1979 and held that seat until 1993. During his time in parliament he was Minister for Community Welfare from 1982 to 1985, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs from 1982 to 1988, Minister for Education and Children's Services from 1985 to 1992 and Minister for Housing, Urban Development, Local Government Relations, Recreation and Sport from 1992 to 1993.

Mr Crafter has made notable contributions to education as President of the International Baccalaureate Organisation and Chair of its Executive Committee from 1996 to 2003

In 2004 Mr Crafter was asked to chair the State Government Review of the South Australian Certificate of Education. The inquiry undertook exhaustive consultation with interested parties, including school communities, the Northern Territory, as well as parents, business, industry, unions and university and further education sectors. There were more than 200 meetings involving more than 1 600 individuals, some 170 written submissions, more than 600 responses to an online survey and a major conference. The work of the Review culminated in the introduction in 2009 of new SACE which aims to create more flexible arrangements, broaden student pathways and develop the enterprise, interpersonal and employment-related skills needed for the future, for individuals and for the best economic and social interests of South Australia.

Mr Crafter served with great distinction as a member of the University Council from 1999 until 2007. He has always given freely of his expertise in the law in the course of Council deliberations and has also served the Council in other ways, including as a valued member of its Senior Executive Review Committee and Special Degrees Committee. During his time on Council Mr Crafter acted as a formal mentor to several of its student members, both undergraduate and postgraduate, providing them with support and advice. I regard his willingness to assume this role, in addition to his other Council duties, as particularly admirable.

Mr Crafter also played a major part in the modernisation and expansion of the University's Alumni Association while serving as its Chair from 1999 to 2004. During this period he oversaw a major "re-discovery" of lost alumni, resulting in a dramatic increase in the number of graduates registered on the Association's data-base. He also encouraged the expansion of the Association's chapters and networks, locally and internationally. Underpinning Mr Crafter's dedication to the Alumni Association was his belief that the University and its work must be accessible to the wider community. He saw the Association as playing an important role in drawing graduates, friends and their families into the University community and sharing its riches with them.

As a Council member and Chair of the Alumni Association, Mr Crafter has served as a member of the Vice-Chancellor's Fundraising Advisory Committee, where he contributed to the cultivation of relationships with prospective donors to the University and to the formulation of fundraising strategies. He also approached and negotiated with some of our major donors.

Mr Crafter served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Don Dunstan Foundation from 1999 to 2007. The Foundation was established in 1999 with a view to perpetuating the memory of Don Dunstan and reflecting his life's work through fostering research, education and discussion on a broad range of social and cultural issues. It is a public charitable trust which is supported by the University of Adelaide, Flinders University and the South Australian government.

As Chair of the Board of Trustees Mr Crafter has guided the development of the Foundation from its inception and has been instrumental in determining its strategic directions. In particular he has fostered productive exchange between academic researchers and government policy makers and assisted in consolidating and expanding the Foundation's links with the wider community.

Under his Chairmanship the Don Dunstan Foundation has established scholarships for undergraduate and postgraduate students, including one for Aboriginal students, provided support for research programs on social inclusion issues, sponsored numerous successful conferences and forums on issues of public concern, established the annual Don Dunstan Human Rights Oration and commissioned the Don Dunstan Fellows program which promotes improved relations with Australia's near international neighbours. These are significant achievements with which the University is proud to be associated.

It is clear that Mr Crafter's commitment to the University has been significant. He has worked hard to foster the allegiance of graduates to the University, assisted in raising additional funds for major projects, and played a major part in the establishment and development of the Don Dunstan Foundation which now acts as an important interface between the University and the community in matters of social justice and social inclusion. He has also made a vital contribution to the governance of the University over many years.

Apart from his service to the University, Mr Crafter has also been a member of the National Catholic Education Commission and board member for the Foundation of Young Australians from 1994 to 2003. Mr Crafter's other contributions have been in the area of health care as a Director of the Little Company of Mary and as Chair of the Board of Management of TRACsa, a centre of excellence in trauma and injury recovery. Mr Crafter has also been a prominent figure in population policy, through the Australian Population Institute, and in leadership development, through the Leaders Institute of South Australia.

I am very pleased and proud to present to you Chancellor, for admission to the degree of Doctor of the University honoris causa — The Hon Greg Crafter.

GRADUATION ADDRESS

Ceremony 5, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Tuesday 13 April 2010, 2:30pm Bonython Hall



SPEAKER: The Hon Greg Crafter AO

Awarded Doctor of the University (*honoris causa*)

Chancellor, Vice Chancellor and President, Members of Council, Members of Staff,
Distinguished Guests, graduates, your families and friends

Firstly may I congratulate each person who is graduating or receiving an award today. Well done. And if I might be so bold as to speak on behalf of the community I say thank you for your contribution to civil society in all that you have achieved. Now the great windows of opportunity are opening ... and beyond is a world waiting in hope and confidence for your contribution.

This graduation ceremony is also an opportunity for each of us to say thank you to everyone who has supported, encouraged and guided us over the years and who today shares in a special way in our achievements and our successes.

This is also an occasion to recognise the richness of the scholarship that exists within The University of Adelaide. The quality of the teaching and learning and research we have experienced is due to the traditions, indeed the culture, of dedication and commitment built by the academic staff and the whole university community over these last 134 years since its establishment in 1874. We belong to Australia's third oldest University and recently ranked in the top 100 universities of the world

We are privileged to be graduates of the University of Adelaide.

I have asked myself many times, why me? How was I chosen to study Law? Why was I chosen ahead of so many others to study at this university?

It wasn't because of my Year 12 results, because I had left school after the 11th grade. I was 25 years old when I began my tertiary studies.

In my case, someone judged that I was capable of successfully completing the degree of Bachelor of Laws with little hard evidence at hand of my academic ability. I was determined not to let that person down.

So how did that opportunity come about? For the first fifteen years of my life I lived on farms and attended small state schools. It was only when my family moved to Adelaide that I first lived in a house with electricity and running water. That was common for many of my classmates.

By today's standards we had poor school facilities and our teachers, though dedicated, were not highly trained. My country high school did not offer a 12th year and very few students completed the 11th year, or Leaving as it was then appropriately called.

Nevertheless I believe I received an education that equipped me well for adulthood. Looking back, most of my fellow students have forged successful careers and have engaged in active citizenship.

One of classmates, for example, was Michael Fatchen who recently retired as Commodore of the P & O Line. Glen Shorrock was another. He is a household name in the world of entertainment. And my brother Tony forged a career as a respected test cricket umpire. I could go on with many such examples.

I have come to realise that a well rounded education emanates from many sources, one of which is schooling.

My move to the city in 1960 at the age of fifteen introduced me to another education experience. A high school with more than 2000 students, a strong academic tradition and a mass of extra curricular activities.

My new school friends were the children of refugees and displaced persons from central Europe, from mostly poor families living in the Western suburbs rebuilding their lives after World War II. Like me, many were from families who had moved to the city from the country seeking better education and work opportunities for their children. There were five of us from my year at Woodville High School who later were elected members of the State and Commonwealth Parliaments. Four of us served as Ministers of the Crown. Of course we were all of the same political persuasion. None of us foresaw our future moving in this direction when we were at school.

While I greatly enjoyed attending school, I struggled in this huge city high school environment, and I left school to work as a junior clerk in the Court House at Port Adelaide. This is where my interest in the law began.

One of my duties was to register unsatisfied judgment summons, hundreds of them each month for example related to small amounts of money, often less than two pounds, that families owed to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for outpatient services.

In doing my job of work, I was starting a process that ended with many of these people being imprisoned in those days at the Adelaide Goal, usually for a period of 10 days. This experience awakened my interest in justice, which sadly was not always synonymous with the law, and its everyday counterpart, social justice.

So at twenty years of age I left the Court House and set out to change the world as a Church youth worker - firstly in South Australia and later in North Queensland.

This was a formative experience for me, and in time I came to realize that, in order to be effective in bringing about the changes I saw as necessary to build a fairer and more just society, I needed the knowledge, the skills and discipline in my life that came with a university degree. In 1970 I was offered a place in the Law School and took on a full year's workload as well as working as a barman at a Port Adelaide Hotel.

There followed a further seven years of part time study, every day of which was a challenge because I had gone on to secure employment as the private secretary to three respective Attorney Generals during the 1970's. A time of unprecedented law reform and change in the

administration of justice. Nevertheless I received my Bachelor of Laws degree in 1978 from the then Chancellor, Dame Roma Mitchell - a most memorable day for me and for my family.

One year later, ill health forced the Premier Don Dunstan to retire and I was duly elected to fill the vacancy as the Member for Norwood in the House of Assembly. My opportunity to change the world had come, and it had come in a way I had never anticipated.

I strived to make the most of this great opportunity to serve the State and to do so to the best of my ability. Together with my association with this university, another privilege had come my way.

I have always appreciated the words of the French scientist Louis Pasteur who is credited with saying "Fortune favors the prepared mind".

I regard my university education as an essential ingredient in my good fortune. I trust that for each of today's graduates, you too will find good fortune in your lives. And I believe that you too will come to realise that your good fortune is due in some measure to the capabilities and values that you acquired during your time as a student at Adelaide University and your continuing association throughout your lives.

Good Fortune comes in many forms. For me it is the joy and satisfaction that comes from working with others to build a better world. Not by doing the big and brassy things, but in every day life, by simply making the most of the opportunities that have come my way. By never losing faith in one's fellow citizens to understand the human condition and by responding to human need wherever and however it is revealed.

The challenge for us as alumni is to continue our involvement with the University in some mutually beneficial way. The challenge for our University is to recognise the wealth, indeed treasure, that resides within its alumni and to find ways to make this a lifelong relationship.

The greatest challenge however is for our university to open its doors to all of those students who wish to enter and on merit are entitled to be offered a place but for one reason or another never receive an offer. Many simply study the wrong subjects or attend schools from where their transition to university is more difficult - which in effect for far too many prohibits their transition from school to university.

For those young people who belong to poor and disadvantaged families, the relationship between family income and educational outcomes is painfully evident. It has been my experience and my story that within this group of potential alumni, a rich vein of endeavor awaits to be discovered. It will reveal itself in a multitude of ways if given the opportunity.

Someone in this University had confidence in me many years ago. I promised to myself I would not let that person down. I have been motivated to keep this promise and in return have received the gift of a rich teaching and learning experience, the semblance of "a prepared mind" has evolved and a valuable and valued qualification my reward.

Good fortune has followed me every day since.

I wish each and every one of you similar good fortune for your futures.