



CONGRATULATIONS

class of 2020

LETTER FROM THE
President and Vice-Chancellor



Lakehead
UNIVERSITY

CONGRATULATIONS

on your graduation!

I sincerely wish we could have shared in the celebration of your accomplishments with you, your family and friends, and with your Lakehead family.

While the pandemic has limited our ability to come together in person, it has not limited the significance of your exceptional achievements, and the promise of future successes that come from learning and living these past years as a Lakehead student.

We are especially proud of how well you have adapted to the challenges we have all faced this past term, and how you have demonstrated your resilience and spirit in so many ways.

At the beginning of this academic year, I began thinking about what my convocation message should convey to you. Our world and our plans were so different then. However, the themes I focused on then are still appropriate today.

The promise of a university degree has always been to gain the knowledge and skills to create a better life for yourself and for your communities. Simon Anholt, keynote speaker at the 2019 European Association for International Education, stated that it is possible to tackle all of the world's most pressing challenges, like those presented by climate change, poverty, or a pandemic, within this, "your generation".

Lakehead's mission to be an innovative comprehensive university that provides an education that is about how to think, not what to think, has never been more relevant. We have always seen ourselves as members of learning and knowledge creation communities that share and collaborate for the greater good across national and international borders. As Anholt emphasized, the universities of the world are a diplomatic network that can be "lit up now more powerfully than ever to ensure we work together for our mutual benefit."

It is ever more crucial that you, our newest class of university graduates, are well prepared to act as global citizens. Graduating from Lakehead now has uniquely positioned you to lead lasting transformation.

You should be proud to note that one of the highlights at Lakehead University this past term was being recognized as one of the top 100 Universities from 85 countries around the world in the Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings. THE Impact Rankings are the only global performance tables that assess universities against the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, and affirm Lakehead's commitment to influencing change, and ensuring the health and sustainability of our local and global communities.

While experiencing the tumult during the rise of this pandemic, we have become profoundly aware of how essential it is to learn from one another, to share resources and expertise, and to see ourselves not only seeking individual success, but also as members of communities of minds and bodies collaborating for the betterment of our shared social, economic, and physical health.

We hope you have become more confident in how to employ a range of technologies to ensure that you will have opportunities to thrive in your chosen careers or professions, even when you are neighbourhoods or hemispheres apart. Using virtual tools, you will be able to interact with new levels of effectiveness and personal connections that truly cement long-term relationships and shared commitment.

This is a time of deep change, and you, as both a graduate of Lakehead University and a global citizen, are poised to create a better future for yourself, your local communities, and our world.

Keep us in your hearts and in your minds as you, our exceptional 2020 graduates, make our future together brighter. We cannot wait to learn about your many successes!

Sincerley,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Moira McPherson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Moira McPherson, Ph.D.
President and Vice-Chancellor



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