



April 23, 2018

King's awarding honorary doctorates to Dale Godsoe, Lawrence Hill and Bruce Gordon

Halifax | The University of King's College will award honorary doctorates at its 230th Encaenia ceremony on May 23, 2019, at the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium, to **Dale Godsoe, Lawrence Hill** and **Bruce Gordon**.

Educator and tireless community leader **Dale Godsoe** has dedicated her life to making communities better places for all of us. She has had an inspiring career of service as both a professional and volunteer in education, the arts, health care, economic development and public affairs.

Godsoe joined King's Board of Governors in 2007. She became Chair of the Board in 2013 and provided wise, patient and steady leadership in that role until 2018.

Her other innumerable accomplishments span charitable and public sectors. She chairs the board of Develop Nova Scotia (previously the Waterfront Development Corporation) and serves as Past Chair of the QEII Foundation. She's been a member of the boards of the National Arts Centre, the National Ballet School, Canadian Centre for Philanthropy, YWCA Canada, the Women in Media Foundation and Imagine Canada—all on the national level, and often as board chair. Locally, she's chaired HRMbyDESIGN, Halifax Regional Plan and Centre Plan. She chaired Symphony Nova Scotia's Listen to the Future Campaign and now chairs its foundation. She's chaired Halifax's United Way Campaign and also served on their board. And on the commercial side, she has served on the boards of Hambros Bank, Vision TV (chair), Viacom Canada, Halterm and Aliant. Not surprisingly, she's been called one of Nova Scotia's most accomplished people ever.

Godsoe was recognized in 1995 with a Canada Volunteer Award and in 1998, with the Order of Canada. She graduated from Dalhousie University with a BA, BEd, and MEd and began her career as a school teacher. She went on to Chair the Halifax School Board, Chair Mount Saint Vincent University's Board, and to serve for 10 years as Vice-President External of Dalhousie University. In addition to enjoying mutually supportive relationships with her three daughters, Suzanne, Stacey and Laura, Godsoe continues to find ways to provide advice and guidance to the next generation of leaders, including second-year King's student and Loran Scholar Katie Clarke, and through mentorship lifts and empowers others—especially young women—to achieve greatness.

For her tireless, wise leadership in governance, and unequivocal dedication to the best interests of King's and her community, educator and community leader **Dale Godsoe** will receive a Doctor of Civil Law (*honoris causa*).

Author and professor **Lawrence Hill**'s life story is an opus that's still being written. Hill is a professor of creative writing at the University of Guelph. He has so far authored 10 books, including *The Illegal*, *The Book of Negroes* and *Black Berry, Sweet Juice: On Being Black and White in Canada*.

At Encaenia, he will stand alongside his daughter, who is graduating from King's with a BA(Hons). Because of this connection, Hill has taken an active interest in the academic life of King's. In July 2018, he was a keynote speaker at Humanities for Young People, King's live-in summer residency program for teens. His writing has also inspired many burgeoning writers and thinkers in the King's community, and he has moved and challenged readers across Canada and around the world.

Hill's writing explores themes of racism and inequality, and also of identity, belonging and of connections between peoples of the African Diaspora. At a moment in King's history when we are examining our connections to slavery through a scholarly inquiry, and seeking to make our university a more welcoming and supportive place for all students, we are fortunate to nurture our association with Hill.

He's been awarded The Commonwealth Writers' Prize, and he was the first person to win CBC Radio's Canada Reads twice. Hill delivered the Canada-wide 2013 Massey Lectures, based on his non-fiction book *Blood: The Stuff of Life*. He co-wrote the adaptation for the six-part television miniseries of his novel *The Book of Negroes*, which tells the story of a girl's abduction in Africa and enslavement in America, her escape to freedom in Nova Scotia, and her final journey back to Africa. The miniseries was filmed partly in Nova Scotia, and attracted millions of viewers in the United States and Canada. It won 11 Canadian Screen Awards.

The recipient of the 2017 Canada Council for the Arts Molson Prize, Hill served as chair of the jury of the 2016 Scotiabank Giller Prize. He is a Member of the Order of Canada, and lives with his family in Hamilton, Ont. and in Woody Point, NL.

For his prolific and purposeful writing and teaching career, including his vital role in charting the journeys of people of African descent through slavery and freedom in Nova Scotia and Canada, **Lawrence Hill** will receive a Doctor of Civil Law (*honoris causa*).

Historian, King's alumnus and Yale professor **Dr. Bruce Gordon** is not only a brilliant scholar who finished King's Foundation Year Program in 1981 with the highest grade in his year.

Gordon completed a BA(Hons) in Medieval Studies at King's and Dalhousie, graduating with first-class honours and a medal, then enrolled in an MA in Classics at Dalhousie in 1986. His curiosity about the Swiss Reformation led him to the University of St. Andrews in Scotland, where he completed a PhD in this subject. He subsequently established himself as a leading scholar of the Reformation generally, and of John Calvin and the Swiss Reformation in particular.

After serving as Lecturer, Reader, and then Professor of Modern History at St. Andrews, he was appointed to Yale University in 2008 and in 2009 became the Titus Street Professor of Ecclesiastical History—an appointment held by only the most distinguished historians in Gordon’s field. His most recent book is *John Calvin’s Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Princeton, 2016), which looks at how one of the defining works of the Reformation was received from the 16th century to the age of YouTube. He is also the author of *Calvin* (Yale, 2009), a biography of the Genevan reformer, and *The Swiss Reformation* (Manchester, 2002), a Choice Magazine “Outstanding Publication” (2003). Gordon maintains a scholarly relationship with Switzerland, and continues working closely with the faculty and students of the Institute for Swiss Reformation History in Zurich.

When he was a grad student at Dalhousie, Gordon kept his close association to King’s and lived on campus, serving as Don at King’s North Pole Bay residence. He was a much-loved Don and regularly hosted gatherings of students for conversation and fellowship, or to support them in their studies. His North Pole Bay students still remember the personal warmth and care with which he guided and mentored them.

Diagnosed with bipolar disorder after his time at King’s, Gordon is committed to increasing awareness of mental health. He is currently president of the New Haven affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness. He has shared his insights with the King’s Chapel Community during his return visits to campus. He has also come home to King’s several times to speak to the Early Modern Studies Program and to deliver Night FYP (Foundation Year Program) lectures, which are often open to the public.

For leading scholarship on ecclesiastical history, **Bruce Gordon** will receive a Doctor of Canon Law (honoris causa).

“We are proud to have the opportunity to bestow our highest honours on these members of the King’s community for what they mean to King’s and for what they have contributed in their different fields and different ways to the world,” says King’s President William Lahey.

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Photos for all three recipients provided. **Please credit Lawrence Hill’s photo to Lisa Sakulensky.**

About the University of King’s College

Established in 1789, King's College is Canada's oldest chartered university. A small and extraordinarily lively academic community located in Halifax, Nova Scotia, King's is known nationally and internationally for its highly acclaimed interdisciplinary programs in the humanities and journalism, including our Foundation Year Program.

For more information and to arrange interviews, please contact:

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