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KING'S
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Honouring two exceptional women at King's 233 Encaenia

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The University of King's College will honour two women whose lives unite extraordinary professional accomplishment with public service at its 233 Encaenia on May 25. Inglis Professor Kim Kierans and Kathryn R. Burton are widely recognized as leaders in their fields and for the significant commitment they have demonstrated to public service throughout their careers.

Burton has held influential leadership roles in public administration, community-focused foundations and volunteerism, much of it in the city of Boston, Massachusetts. Throughout her career, Burton has seamlessly woven together private ventures and public service to the benefit of communities close to her heart.

Well-known to over two decades of King's graduates through her roles as journalism faculty and Vice-President, Kierans's dedication to the highest principles of journalism is evident in the work she has conducted to teach journalism in developing countries and as Director of the Michener Awards Foundation.

Kathryn R. Burton

Kathryn R. Burton, BA'98, has built an exemplary career path with social and cultural impact. A prominent public figure in Boston and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Burton has distinguished herself as an exceptional leader and administrator, notably during the pandemic. Born in the United States, Burton is a member of the Gesgapegiag Mi'kmaw community in Gaspé, Que., spent her formative years in Eskasoni (N.S.), and has family in Membertou (N.S.) and Listuguj. (Que.). She attended King's as a Dr. Carrie Best Scholar.

Now a Partner at Sparks Street Capital in Boston, Burton was Chief of Staff to Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh from March 2020 until Walsh was appointed Secretary of Labour in the administration of United States President Joe Biden in 2021. She was the first Indigenous person to hold a cabinet-level position in Boston's history of governance. In partnership with Mayor Walsh, Burton is esteemed for the exceptional leadership she provided to the city and people of Boston during the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic. In an article in *The Boston Globe*, Mayor Walsh described Burton as "someone who is smart and driven," and who has a "commitment to common sense solutions."

Prior to her position with the City of Boston, Burton served as Chief of Staff to Steve Grossman, State Treasurer of Massachusetts, managing his successful state-wide election campaign. The magnitude of her responsibilities and accomplishments in those roles led to her position in the administration of Mayor Walsh. She was a senior official in the Barbara Lee Family Foundation supporting and electing women in politics and she served on an advisory panel created by former Governor of Massachusetts Charlie Baker to guide decision making on the reopening of the Massachusetts economy in 2020.

Burton has consulted for Harvard's Institute of Politics and the Association of Marshall Scholars and served as Vice-Chair of the Rose F. Kennedy Greenway Conservancy Board, where she played a leading role in the negotiation of a new multi-party funding agreement. She presently serves on the President's Council of the Boston Children's Museum and as a Board member of the Canadian American Business Council, a nonprofit, nonpartisan, issues-oriented organization dedicated to fostering dialogue between the public and private sectors in the US and Canada.

Burton's readiness to share her time and expertise with those with whom she makes common cause includes King's, where she is a member of the college's recently formed Mi'kmaw and Indigenous Advisory Circle. In this role and as a loyal alum, Burton is sharing her vision and leadership experience as a socially-engaged public figure—along with her understanding of the challenges facing Mi'kmaw youth—to support the university's work to offer a positive learning environment for Indigenous students and a welcoming workplace for Indigenous faculty and staff.

“Since graduating from King's, Kathryn has built a distinguished career in public service between Canada and the United States and at the boundaries of Indigenous and settler cultures,” said King's President William Lahey. “Above and beyond the direct contributions to community wellbeing made throughout her commendable career, Kathryn generously shares her insight to the benefit of the King's community. She is exemplary of the qualities of King's graduates and of the university's goals to better support Indigenous students and all our students on their way to play their roles in all sectors of society. I am pleased to see her great contributions to King's and so many other communities celebrated.”

For exceptional public service in the betterment of her communities, her leadership in creating mutual understanding across cultural and national boundaries, and her inspirational embodiment of the power of a King's education, Kathryn R. Burton will be awarded a Doctor of Civil Laws.

Kim Kierans

Kim Kierans, BA(Hons)'83, has been instrumental to the development of journalism education at King's and around the world. As both a member of faculty and, in her role as Vice-President, a key member of the university administration, Kierans put her talents as a journalist, a teacher and leader in the service of King's. Kierans graduated from King's in 1983 with an honours BA in classics and political science, serving as a residence don during her studies. She later completed a master's in Atlantic Canada Studies from Saint Mary's University. For many years Kierans was a working journalist, primarily with the CBC, where she held the roles of reporter and news editor.

In 1997, she joined King's faculty and went on to teach for over 24 years. Alongside her teaching responsibilities, in 2003, Kierans became Director of (what was then) the School of Journalism and in 2010 she became university Vice-President. As Vice-President, she served King's with distinction, including by playing a leading role in the creation of the university's first Master of Fine Arts in nonfiction and by overseeing wide-ranging policy and administrative improvements.

While at King's, Kierans often spent summers teaching and training journalists in Southeast Asia. She was an adjunct faculty member at the Asian Center of Journalism at the Ateneo de Manila University, where she developed and taught courses for its master's program. Of this experience, she said, "It is very humbling to teach journalists in Asia. There are great obstacles facing journalists in other parts of the world. The program helps to spark a higher commitment and best practices, which are vital to the integrity of news in civil society."

Kierans's expertise in journalism ethics and its potential to positively impact communities was recognized when she was made Director of the Michener Awards Foundation. She also chaired the judging committee of the foundation's prestigious Michener Awards for Meritorious Public Service Journalism, presented each year by the Governor General at Rideau Hall. Kierans additionally chaired a citizen panel that assessed the CBC on the fairness of its coverage of the 2008 federal election and was a media advisor to the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre on NATO's peacekeeping exercises in Canada, Germany and Türkiye. She is the co-author of two books: *Asia Media Innovators 2.0* and *The New Journalist* (2010).

"Inglis Professor Kierans shared her expertise with generations of students, teaching courses on everything from broadcast to print and multimedia journalism," said President Lahey. "Kim is a natural mentor: as Director of the School of Journalism and later Vice-President, her insight and wisdom was valued by colleagues and students alike. With her long history of working with and supporting journalists and journalism students based in post-conflict and developing countries, it is no surprise that Kim is a sought-after voice on panels, at seminars and conferences, and as a guest lecturer in universities worldwide, on topics including journalism ethics, freedom of expression and journalism education. I am delighted that Kim's substantial contributions to King's and to journalism and journalism education will be recognized and celebrated in this way."

Today, Kierans is a Senior Fellow and Resident at Massey College, University of Toronto, where she conducts communications workshops and produces a podcast with interdisciplinary graduate students. She is Vice-Chairperson of the federal Independent Advisory Board on Eligibility for Journalism Tax Measures. As well, she is writing a history of public service journalism through the lens of the Michener Awards, tentatively titled *For the Public Good, the Michener Awards at 50*.

For her dedication to the highest principles of journalism, her professional integrity and deep commitment to the power of journalism for positive social change and for her outstanding service to the University of King's College, Inglis Professor Kim Kierans will be awarded a Doctor of Civil Laws.

About the University of King's College

Established in 1789, King's College is Canada's oldest chartered university and is associated with Dalhousie University. A small and extraordinarily lively academic community located in Halifax (Kjipuktuk), Nova Scotia, King's is known nationally and internationally for its highly acclaimed interdisciplinary programs in the humanities, including its renowned Foundation Year Program, its professional programs in journalism and its fine arts programs in creative writing.

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