

Citation for the Installation of Debra Deane Little, Chancellor

Madame Visitor, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, Members of Convocation, and Distinguished Guests: One of the brightest stars visible to the naked eye, Altair is the central jewel of the asterism known to Greek, Roman and Arab astronomers as the Flying Eagle. In the ancient west, this constellation evoked myths of the supreme god Zeus, whom the majestic eagle served as messenger or as alter ego in mortal visitations. To many cultures past and present, the Altair cluster has suggested other delightful and edifying legends, and its strong, reassuring presence has been looked to in clear and clouded skies, in peaceful or troubled times. It has been a sure guide for navigators, and a bright spark for the imagination. Through the centuries and across diverse cultures, it has illumined the most urgent of goals as well as those that lie beyond the realm of quotidian struggle.

In February, 2020, King's named Debra Deane Little Chancellor. From that time and before, she has proven herself a fearless guide in a time of struggle and a buttress to the College's formative foundations in academics, athletics, and communal living. The first woman to hold the College's highest office, Debra Deane Little is an educator, community leader, and philanthropist. Born in Toronto and raised in London, Ontario, she received BA, BEd and MA degrees from the University of Windsor. She continues to live in that city with her husband, Robert Little, in a home they have shared with three adopted boys, as well as a fourth young man who joined the family when he was 17. One of the Littles' sons is a recent King's graduate, and it was as an engaged King's parent that Debra Deane Little first came to admire the College and its distinctive blend of living and learning in community. That admiration led her and Robert to designate King's as one of two primary beneficiaries of their Alpha Aquilae Foundation, a charity that uses the Latin name for the constellation Altair, and which channels that star's metaphorical power to enrich and to improve lives.

In 2019, King's announced the Debra Deane Little and Robert Little Academic Scholarships for Varsity Athletes. These include 14 four-year entrance scholarships annually for students in the Foundation Year program who play on varsity teams, and additional scholarships of shorter duration to other eligible King's students. Over five years, potentially more than 100 students will have received funding under this unique academic scholarship program. In 2020, a gift \$2 million from the Alpha Aquilae Foundation enabled a comprehensive restoration of three of King's historic student residences known as "bays." These iconic stone buildings have been home to generations of King's students since 1929, providing a unique and vital setting for King's mission. In addition to ensuring that King's students have a healthy, intellectually active, and architecturally beautiful home away from home, the Deane Littles have also ensured that 98 students from the Greater Essex County District School Board in their home town of Windsor will receive renewable scholarships of \$10,000 for their undergraduate educations.

Madame Visitor, fans of science fiction know that Altair's galactic region often provides the setting for alternative, futuristic worlds whose achievements are the envy of terrestrial visitors. Debra Deane Little and her Alpha Aquilae Foundation have made the aspirational actual in our galaxy, in our nation, and in our province. Her efforts to promote and sustain wider awareness of King's, the life-changing education it offers, and the lives of meaning and purpose it nurtures, have made the inspirational actual. Like the eagle the ancients saw in the stars, the fortunes of King's, its students and alumni will surely continue to soar under the wise guidance of our Chancellor, Debra Deane Little.

Domina Visitrix, etc.

