

CHANCELLOR,

I have the honour to present to you, for the award of the degree of Doctor of Science, Honoris Causa, Malcom Eric Nairn.

Mal Nairn was born and grew up in Western Australia. He started his impressive academic career at the Muresk Agricultural College before moving to the University of Queensland where he graduated with the degree of Bachelor of Veterinary Science in 1960. He immediately returned to Western Australia to work as a Veterinary Pathologist with the Department of Agriculture for 5 years, during which time he received the degree of Master of Science (Microbiology) from the University of Western Australia.

Mal then became an Australian Wool Board Scholar at the College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Minnesota in the USA, from where he graduated with a PhD in Veterinary Pathology in 1969.

He returned to Western Australia, to pursue his Veterinary Pathology career as the Senior and subsequently Chief Veterinary Pathologist for the WA Department of Agriculture.

In 1975, Mal joined Western Australia's Murdoch University, as Professor of Clinical Pathology, and later Dean of the School of Veterinary Studies. In 1983, he was appointed as the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Business Manager of Murdoch University, a position in which his business acumen and outstanding management and interpersonal skills were readily apparent.

During the 1980's, Mal's reputation as a distinguished, well-respected scientist and excellent business and university manager resulted in his appointment to many major committees and boards. These included the Higher Education Council of the National Board of Employment, Education and Training, and the (national) Board of Management and the Council of the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research. He was also the Vice-President of the Perth Zoo Board and Chairman of the State Animal Resources Authority in Western Australia.

He was appointed as the Foundation Vice-Chancellor of the Northern Territory University in 1989.

As the inaugural Vice-Chancellor, Mal faced the challenging task of bringing together the University College of the Northern Territory and the Darwin Institute of Technology to form a university to meet the distinctive needs of the Territory. In meeting this challenge, Mal believed that a model that integrated TAFE and Higher Education was appropriate. His vision

was to develop an institution that students from all walks of life would have the opportunity to attend, commencing their study at a level commensurate with their knowledge and experience, and working through a range of programs to achieve their goals.

Mal wanted Northern Territory University students to have access to a series of nested or articulated programs, generous credit for prior study and experience, and opportunities to expand and extend their horizons. He also envisaged many benefits for staff, students and the community from sharing resources and expertise across the sectors. By the end of his term, Mal had successfully integrated TAFE and Higher Education in the structure of the University to an extent not before seen in Australia.

Mal was committed to developing NTU's role as a strong regional university serving not only the needs of Northern Australia, but also those of our near northern neighbours. He saw opportunities to develop niches in the University's education, training and research programs, and encouraged and supported development which was linked to the University's unique location and environment.

He believed that NTU was especially well placed to connect with countries in the BIMP-EAGA and in 1990 led the establishment of a Memorandum of Co-operation with Universitas Pattimura in Ambon and Universitas Nusa Cendana in Kupang, with the intention of promoting activities such as staff exchanges and collaborative research. An underpinning principle often stressed was that all participating universities were to benefit from the relationship. The obvious success of this arrangement attracted several other eastern Indonesian universities to the group and this Memorandum of Co-operation became the core of an expanding international program.

On his appointment, Mal was determined that the physical development of the University would match its development in other respects. Significant growth in student numbers was expected in the early years and existing facilities, which were spread across two campuses at Casuarina and Myilly Point, were clearly inadequate. Mal's commitment to the provision of world class facilities for the Territory's university was evident in his strong leadership of the building program from planning through to construction. During the major building period, the University established a reputation for completing projects on budget and on time. Today, the quality of the Casuarina Campus clearly reflects the excellence of Mal Nairn's vision.

NTU was established during a turbulent time in the university environment, and this was set to continue for some time. Mal Nairn believed that universities needed to develop close partnerships with industry and the community and would also be required to look beyond governments for funding to develop their full potential. In 1992, Mal called on businesses and other leaders to assist in raising funds. The Partnership Appeal was immediately productive and led to the establishment of the University Foundation, which must be regarded as one of the most successful fundraising arms in Australian universities.

In nearly seven years as founding Vice-Chancellor, Emeritus Professor Mal Nairn met the challenges facing the new institution with outstanding success and laid the foundation of a University of which Territorians can be proud.

**CHANCELLOR**

**IN RECOGNITION OF HIS OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO THE NORTHERN TERRITORY UNIVERSITY, AND FOR HIS VISION, LEADERSHIP AND DRIVE IN ESTABLISHING THE NORTHERN TERRITORY UNIVERSITY AS A PROGRESSIVE AND RESPECTED INSTITUTION WHICH SERVES THE NEEDS OF ITS REGION, I PRESENT TO YOU FOR ADMISSION TO THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF SCIENCE, HONORIS CAUSA, MALCOLM ERIC NAIRN**