



University of
Lethbridge

NEWS RELEASE

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University of Lethbridge recognizes significant advocacy work of Paulette Senior with honorary degree

One of Canada's strongest voices in support of women, girls and gender diverse persons, Paulette Senior, will be awarded an honorary degree by the University of Lethbridge as part of its Spring 2021 Convocation celebrations.

Senior came to Canada as an immigrant at the age of 11 and experienced the barriers many racialized girls face, sparking a passion for justice and equality.



“Paulette Senior has spent much of her life working to create an inclusive society that is free of violence and poverty,” says U of L Chancellor Charles Weaselhead. “Her dedication to supporting and empowering those who face barriers serves as an outstanding example for our students and represents the global citizenship we teach throughout our programs. We are very pleased she has accepted our offer of an honorary degree.”

Senior will be conferred the degree of Doctor of Laws, honoris causa, at the Chancellor's Reception on Thursday, June 10, 2021.

Paulette Senior

At the tender age of 11, Paulette Senior joined her family in Canada, leaving her grandmother's home in Jamaica. After marrying young, Senior became a single parent and, wanting to ensure she could provide for her son, became a full-time student at York University. Thanks to the support of her family, she completed a double honours BA in psychology and urban studies while working part-time.

Senior began her career in the social services sector and soon learned the systemic barriers she'd faced were widespread. As a frontline worker and community advocate in some of Toronto's most diverse and economically marginalized neighbourhoods, she saw the structural barriers that prevented inclusion, advancement and even survival for women, young people and particularly folks from racialized communities.

In response, she worked across several program areas within various organizations, including in shelters, supportive housing, employment counselling and leadership development for women, and became a vocal proponent of equity and justice.

The success of her efforts eventually led to a national role as the CEO of the YWCA. In 2016, Senior became the President and CEO of the Canadian Women's Foundation, a national charitable organization focused on gender equality. The Foundation raises funds to support programs across Canada which address gender-based violence, economic security, girls' empowerment and inclusive leadership, with a priority on communities with the greatest need, while advocating for systemic change.

Her work has earned her numerous awards, including the Harry Jerome Leadership Award, African Canadian Achievement Award, Afroglobal Excellence Award for Leadership, Black Women Civic Engagement Award and the MicroSkills Margot Franssen Leadership Award.

To view online: <https://www.ulethbridge.ca/unews/article/university-lethbridge-recognizes-significant-advocacy-work-paulette-senior-honorary-degree#.YLUFdZNKj0s>

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