



University of
Lethbridge

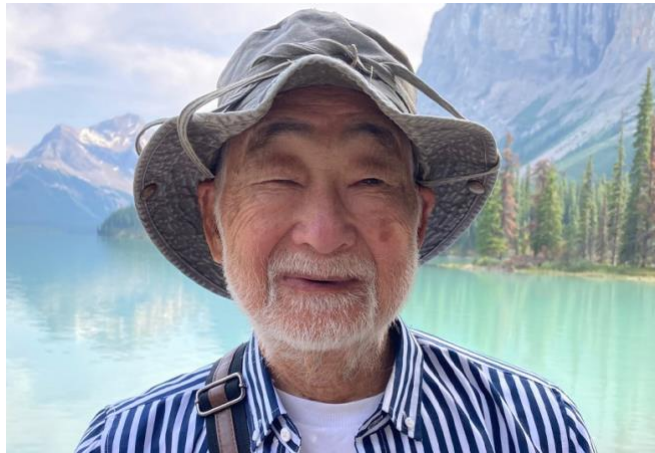
NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release — Monday, May 6, 2024

University of Lethbridge to recognize Tad Mitsui's commitment to bettering society with honorary degree

Tadashi (Tad) Mitsui has devoted his life to enriching the lives of citizens and their communities locally, nationally and internationally through compassion, courage, empathy and activism, giving a voice to those unheard and hope to those in need. The University of Lethbridge will recognize Mitsui's dedication to bettering society by granting him an honorary degree at Spring 2024 Convocation.

"It's hard to grasp all the ways in which Tad Mitsui has made a difference in people's lives, through his work as a minister, a volunteer or simply a caring citizen," says University of Lethbridge Chancellor Terry Whitehead (BA '94). "Still today, the letters he pens in the local paper are poignant, thoughtful and extremely insightful. The University is proud to recognize his commitment to humanity with an honorary degree."



The University of Lethbridge will present Tad Mitsui with an honorary Doctor of Letters, honoris causa, at Spring 2024 Convocation, Ceremony I, on Thursday, May 30, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. in the 1st Choice Savings Centre gymnasium.

Tadashi (Tad) Mitsui

Had you no idea his pen was behind the thoughtful, engaging Letters to the Editor in the local newspaper, or that he'd been recognized with an honorary Doctor of Divinity from United Theological College affiliated with McGill University, you could assume Tad Mitsui was an earnest volunteer giving his time to Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden and assisting as a guest moderator for the Southern Alberta Council on Public Affairs.

Were you to take the time to listen to him speak, to present a sermon as Minister Emeritus at Southminster United Church or deliver his Tad and Tomo Stories to children at the garden, you would quickly begin to grasp the full depth of Tad Mitsui's experience and the fascinating and meaningful life he has lived.

Born in Japan, Mitsui earned a Bachelor of Art and Bachelor of Divinity from Tokyo Union Theological Seminary in 1956. The following year he immigrated to Canada and was ordained into the United Church of Canada in 1958. For 10 years he served as minister with the Vancouver Japanese United Church, all the while earning a Master of Sacred Theology from Union College, affiliated with the University of British Columbia, and later a Doctor of Sacred Theology at United Theological College.

From 1968 through 1975, Mitsui was a lecturer and then Dean of Student Affairs at the University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. Throughout the 1970s, 80s and 90s he worked out of Geneva, Switzerland (six years living in and commuted frequently) performing administrative and advocacy work with NGOs and ecumenical organizations to facilitate international projects related to human rights, refugees, liberation movements, food security and development.

The work he did in areas such as human rights, justice and development was impactful and often fraught with danger in conflict environments. From 1975-79 he served as the Associate Secretary for Africa, International Headquarters of the World University Service, where he worked as a fundraiser and coordinator of anti-Apartheid solidarity work of National World University Service committees. From 1988-90 he was the Associate Secretary for the Canadian Council of Churches for Africa and Middle East, helping coordinate the churches' work among Palestinian refugees in Israel and other Middle East countries.

Since moving to Lethbridge, he has continued to use his knowledge and experience to better society. A devoted volunteer at Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden, his expertise and wise counsel have helped advance the garden's programming and impact on the community and in 2023, he was awarded a Queen Elizabeth Golden Jubilee Medal.

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Our University's Blackfoot name is Iniskim, meaning Sacred Buffalo Stone. The University

is located in traditional Blackfoot Confederacy territory. We honour the Blackfoot people and their traditional ways of knowing in caring for this land, as well as all Indigenous Peoples who have helped shape and continue to strengthen our University community.