

## **KATHRYN PITKIN**

### **Citation for the conferral of Doctor of the University (*honoris causa*)**

Vice-Chancellor, it is a privilege to present to you and to this gathering, for the award of Doctor of the University (*honoris causa*), Ms Kathryn Pitkin.

Ms Pitkin had a distinguished career as a rural school teacher, and in regional vocational education spanning more than 30 years, including more than 21 years as a teacher and Institute Manager with NSW TAFE. Reflecting her commitment to expanding opportunity, and educational attainment, in rural and Indigenous communities she lived and worked across rural and regional NSW including periods in Bathurst, Walgett and Lightning Ridge.

Reflecting the University's commitment to 'service for the public good', Ms Pitkin continued after retirement to contribute her skills, energy and enthusiasm for education and opportunity as a volunteer manager of OzScot Australia - an Australia international young people's touring company that has performed at military tattoos in Sydney, Perth, Scotland, Oman, Canada, Korea and the United States.

She continues to be actively engaged in the community and vocational education, running programs in mental health for the Hunter Institute for Mental Health, volunteering for the National Trust of Australia (NSW) and teaching music.

Ms Pitkin was a member of the University Council for almost 12 years, serving as Deputy Chancellor from 2007 until her retirement in September 2014. During this time she made a very significant and distinguished contribution to the mission, development and advancement of Charles Sturt University.

As a former educator and senior manager in NSW TAFE, Ms Pitkin brought to the membership of the Council an in-depth understanding of the challenges and opportunities of providing vocational education to rural, regional and Indigenous students, the impact of social and educational disadvantage on education participation and attainment, and the construction of meaningful pathways to higher education.

Her adept leadership of the Finance and Infrastructure Committee and the Chancellor Search Committee during a period of significant external change and internal transformation distinguished her period with the Council. As Chair of the Finance and Infrastructure Committee she steered the refinement of the University's financial and commercial activity oversight to better reflect the increased scale and complexity of the University, and the rapidly changing budgetary environment in which the University operated. Her leadership was underpinned by her commitment to efficiency, accountability and transparency in financial and commercial transactions.

As Chair of the Chancellor Search Committee she led a complex process of selection that aimed to solidify the significant governance reforms championed successfully by Chancellor Willett and resulted in the election of the University's first female Chancellor, Dr Michele Allan.

Ms Pitkin was also a strong advocate of the development of the University's campuses, encouraging the University in particular to consider the Port Macquarie initiative as a strategy to strengthen its enrolment base in the context of stagnating growth in target populations across the inland campuses. This strategy has been a significant success for the University, leading to \$20 million in federal funding and sustained growth in load that has offset losses elsewhere and which is expected to support long term sustainability for the University.

Chancellor, I now present Ms Kathryn Pitkin, a determined advocate for expanding regional education opportunities and a passionate supporter of the University, who has made, in the words of Charles Napier Sturt, a significant contribution to the "public good" by making an outstanding contribution to the establishment of Charles Sturt University as a regional, national and international institution.

**Dated this Seventeenth Day of December Two Thousand and Fourteen**