



## Media Release

April 13, 2017

### St. Thomas University to Honour Alex Neve and Sandra Irving at Spring Convocation May 9

St. Thomas University will be bestowing honorary degrees on human rights advocate Alex Neve and philanthropist Sandra Irving at its Spring Convocation on May 9.

Neve is Secretary General of Amnesty International Canada, a group independent of any political ideology, economic interest, or religion. An internationally respected human rights advocate, Neve has been a member of Amnesty International since his university days in 1985 and has gone on to lead numerous Amnesty International missions throughout Africa, Latin America, and Canada. He represents the organization regularly at international meetings and summits. He also serves on the boards of directors of the Canadian Centre for International Justice, the Centre for Law and Democracy, and Partnership Africa-Canada.

Neve earned a Bachelor of Commerce and Bachelor of Laws from Dalhousie University and a Masters of International Human Rights Law from the University of Essex. He has served on the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, taught human rights and refugee law at Osgoode Hall Law School and the University of Ottawa, and has been affiliated with the Centre for Refugee Studies at York University. He has written numerous reports for Amnesty International and appears regularly before Canadian parliamentary committees, as well as United Nations and Inter-American human rights bodies. A sought-after commentator on human rights issues, he has spoken at Oxford and Harvard, and he delivered the Vigod Lecture in Human Rights at St. Thomas University. Neve is an Officer of the Order of Canada.

Irving is a champion of higher education, noting that what she and husband Arthur Irving like to do best is “help students.” She worked alongside her husband in the development of the K.C. Irving Environmental Science Centre and Harriet Irving Botanical Gardens, a gift to Acadia University from the Irving family. They support students at UNB, Acadia, Dartmouth College, St. Thomas University, St. Francis Xavier, St. Mary's, and the University of Toronto, and have supported the career aspirations of some of the province's best student athletes. She also served as a Board Member of UNB, the Roosevelt International Park Commission, the Saint John Regional Hospital Health Authority, Theatre New Brunswick, Drug Awareness Resistance Education, Dialogue New Brunswick, and the Boys and Girls Club of Saint John.

Irving earned a Bachelor of Arts with distinction from the University of New Brunswick in Saint John and a Master of Arts from the University of Toronto. As Chair of the President's Advisory Council of the Royal Society of Canada, she encouraged greater recognition of Canada's leading professors and researchers. She assisted the Royal Society in engaging youth and First Nations, extending its mandate to creative and performing arts, and mentoring young faculty. Sandra and Arthur also made a gift to establish RSC-Atlantic to foster connections between outstanding scholars and universities in our region. A cancer survivor, Irving is dedicated to supporting research to find a cure and is a strong supporter of the Canadian Cancer Society. In recognition of her public service, she was awarded the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal, was made Honorary Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, a Paul Harris Fellow by the Rotary Club of Saint John, and was named to the Order of Canada.

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