**Citation – David Collins**

Honorary Fellowship - Thursday, 14 April 2022, 2.30pm

Pro-Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present David Collins to you for an Honorary Fellowship of the University for his determination and commitment to fundraising for Sydney Uni Sport and Fitness and the University of Sydney Sport Foundation.

David first attended the University of Sydney in 1963, completing his Bachelor of Arts with Honours in 1968 and his Diploma of Education in 1969. During his time as a student, David joined the Athletics Club, serving as Captain and becoming part of the Sydney Uni Sport and Fitness family.

In 1966, David was awarded a University Blue, one of the highest honours a sportsperson can receive at the University of Sydney. This award recognised David’s achievements whilst competing at the highest level of athletic contest and achieving outstanding sporting results in athletics during his years as a student. David represented the University throughout his time studying and continued to do so beyond his time as a student. In 1972, whilst captaining the Sydney University Athletics Club, he was also captain of the NSW Athletics team, during which time, he won a silver medal in the decathlon at the National Championships. The following year, David retired from athletics but remained an active member of the Club.

After his time at the Sydney University Athletics Club as a competitor and volunteer, David married and was posted to Papua New Guinea. Later in his career the family moved to New York. During his time overseas, he remained in contact with Sydney University Sport and Fitness and the Athletics Club. David returned to the University in May 2003, working in what is now known as the Development Office.

When David retired from the University’s Advancement Services Team in 2008, SUSF immediately offered him the role of Secretary of the University of Sydney Sport Foundation, alongside Rodney Tubbs who was Chair of the Foundation. Over the last 12 years, he has ensured that the Foundation was compliant with the University’s Rules for Foundations and overseen the movement of every penny, chased every pledge and continued to try and make it easy for people to donate in an ever increasingly administrative world. David has performed superbly.

David, and his wife Cheryl are also donors, including a perpetually named sporting scholarship known as the “Collins/Peasley Scholarship”, and have also contributed to other similar scholarships offered at the University of Sydney. These scholarships provide student athlete recipients with financial support, academic assistance and access to sports psychologists and facilities. They endeavour to improve the life of any recipient of these scholarships in a holistic way. In the Sydney Uni Sport & Fitness inaugural online fundraising event last year, David and Cheryl were described as being no better examples of the ‘why’ of our scholarship program and were chosen as ‘the voice’ of why one should donate. David spoke with passion and drive to helping future students in an online video, which influenced others and helped to raise more funds for future scholarships.

David was instrumental in the establishment of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia Indigenous Scholarship. The scholarship supported educational opportunities for persons with otherwise limited prospects of entering the University for reasons beyond their own control to become a student at the University of Sydney. This perpetually named scholarship is awarded to a male or female Indigenous athlete each year, making a significant difference to their student experience.

David heavily supported the University’s needs for resources for growth through Sydney Uni Sport and Fitness infrastructure. He managed every philanthropic dollar raised by the Sport Foundation, which included $15 million worth of capital fund raising over the past 10 years. David and his wife have also been generous donors to several capital campaigns including the Finishing Touches Fund for the Sydney Uni Sport and Fitness Extension in 2013 and the Building on Excellence Campaign for the new TAG Family Grandstand in 2016.

Over the last 20 years, David has attended almost every Blues dinner with Cheryl (herself a graduate of the University and a 1972 Olympian), who served as the Secretary of the Blues Association from 2005 to 2017.

Pro-Chancellor, I present David Collins for an Honorary Fellowship of the University and invite you to confer the title upon him in recognition of his exceptional support of the interests and welfare of the student athletes, and for his volunteerism for sport and fitness at the University of Sydney.