

Ms Gabrielle Hollows

The honorary degree of Doctor of Health Sciences was conferred upon Gabrielle Hollows by the Chair of the Academic Board, Associate Professor Peter McCallum, at the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery graduation ceremony at 4.00pm on 30 March 2012.

An orthoptist and founding Director of the The Fred Hollows Foundation, Ms Hollows has been named one of Australia's 100 Living Treasures, given the Advance Australia Award for Community Service and made Paul Harris Fellow by Rotary International. She has made an outstanding contribution to the promotion of eye health care in Australia and overseas, working tirelessly with Fred Hollows until his death in 1993 and continuing his work afterwards through the Foundation.



The Chair of the Academic Board, Associate Professor Peter McCallum and honorary degree recipient Gabrielle Hollows, *photo, copyright Memento Photography*; Professor Peter McCallum with honorary degree recipient Gabrielle Hollows following the ceremony, *photo, courtesy of the Faculty of Nursing website*.

Citation

It gives me great pleasure to commend Gabrielle Hollows to you for admission to the degree of Doctor of Health Science (honoris causa). Gabrielle has distinguished herself through her outstanding contributions to the promotion of eye health care in Australia and overseas, which has influenced the thinking and general well-being of the wider community.

Gabi Hollows graduated with a Diploma in Orthoptics from the NSW School of Orthoptics (later the Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Sydney) in 1973. After initially working in Newcastle and Gosford, Gabi took up a position at The Prince of Wales Hospital. In 1976 she joined the National Trachoma and Eye Health Program which was initiated and led by the late Professor Fred Hollows AC and sponsored by the Royal Australian College of Ophthalmologists and the Federal Government. Over three years, Gabi and Fred visited more than 465 remote communities with a team that treated Indigenous Australians for trachoma and other serious eye conditions.

Gabi was founding director and Patron of the Fred Hollows Foundation, Miracle Club and the public face of the Foundation. The Foundation works internationally on comprehensive, quality eye care and is an advocate of effective health programs for Indigenous Australians, and Gabi has continued to work tirelessly for over 15 years, without Fred, to meet the Foundations objectives. Working with blindness prevention organisations in more than 19 countries throughout Africa and Asia, Gabi has worked with the Foundation to restore the sight of more than one million people worldwide. The Foundation's work goes beyond eye health. In recent years it has partnered with the Australian publishing industry to set up the Indigenous Literacy Project, aiming to provide reading material to remote Indigenous communities.

Gabi has overseen the manufacture of three million intraocular lenses and the training of hundreds of eye

doctors. Her work, and that of the Foundation, has contributed immeasurably to the restoration of sight for millions and with it, the opportunity for these people to lead productive, dignified lives. The Foundation carries out successful eye programs in the Northern Territory, and initiatives designed to close the gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. With Gabi's support the foundation has pioneered modern techniques of cataract surgery and operates in over 30 countries worldwide, with new programs launched in places such as North Korea, Rwanda, Lao PDR and Burundi. The Foundation works with partners to develop new technology for the developing world, delivering innovative solutions through specifically designed lathes, lasers and microscopes.

The impact of her work has been widely acknowledged and she has received many awards, including an Advance Australia Award for Community Service and a Paul Harris Fellowship by Rotary International. She has been named as one of Australia's 100 Living National Treasures. In 2003, she was awarded a Centenary Medal by the federal government. In 2011 Gabi was awarded the University of Sydney Health Sciences Alumni Award for Community Achievement.

Gabi Hollows continues to play an influential role in treating avoidable blindness both here and abroad, as well as in improving Indigenous health through her work with the Fred Hollows Foundation. She has made a remarkable contribution to the welfare of our society and we are delighted to take this opportunity to recognise her exemplary efforts.

I present Gabrielle Hollows for admission to the degree of Doctor of Health Science (honoris causa), and I invite you to confer the degree upon her.