

Ms Denise North

BEC(Hons) Sydney MBA AGSM, FAICD - a major contributor to International House through her dedication to its redevelopment and to securing its long-term future

Honorary Fellow of the University

Conferring ceremony: 11.30am, 23 April 2014 (Business School).

Citation

Deputy Chancellor, I have much pleasure in presenting Ms Denise North for the award of an Honorary Fellowship of the University of Sydney, in recognition of her support of the interests and welfare of the University, notably through her work as Chair of the Council of International House.

Denise North (BEC Hons, 1982 MBA (AGSM) 2001, FAICD) was a resident of International House during her undergraduate years. She vigorously engaged with the House's activities, and subsequently maintained contacts both with friends made during that time, and with the House itself. In 2004 she became a member of the International House Council, and in 2006 took on the role of Chair, serving in that capacity until 2013.

Ms North assumed office just as International House Sydney, after forty years of operation, was embarking on a major strategic planning exercise which has resulted in a development programme involving rebuilding and expansion. It was probably inevitable that the process should be protracted, but no-one could have foreseen the difficulties that have arisen at every turn, beginning with the Global Financial Crisis, and continuing with constant development of new University policies and procedures, and revised plans for student accommodation.

Throughout this challenging period, Ms North led the Council with distinction. The Council developed a vision for the future of International House, and Denise was at once tireless and resourceful in collegial work on strategy and planning, and in frustrating and seemingly never-ending negotiations. She won the respect of University personnel with whom she has dealt for her tenacity, balance and articulateness. Her ability to talk finance has stood International House in good stead during an extremely demanding few years. There is ground still to be made, but the development project is now part of the University's forward planning, and major governance issues are within sight of resolution.

Throughout, Ms North has proceeded with the International House mission statement firmly in mind:

International House seeks to **nurture a resident community of scholars** who commit themselves to the value and importance of **international understanding and fellowship**. We promote this vision by bringing together **international and Australian students** in a richly diverse community with wide opportunities for interaction in a **congenial and supportive environment in comfortable accommodation**.

She has been dedicated to the redevelopment of International House and securing its long term future. In particular, she has insisted on the centrality of the community building and pastoral care aspects of the House's operation. In 2009, in conjunction with an employment commitment, she undertook a study tour of four North American International Houses, gaining valuable insights into the operations of each, concluding that there is no single model that generates the richness of the International House resident experience: each is a unique response to its particular environment.

Ms North has been indefatigable in promoting the interests of International House both within the University and to the wider community. She is exemplary of alumni and friends who commit to the University substantial amounts of their time and energy while managing full professional lives. Her most recent 'day job' has been Chief Executive and Company Secretary of the professional body for Insolvency Practitioners in Australia. However her career has taken her into government and various aspects of the private sector, ranging from the role of policy adviser to the Federal Minister for Industry, Technology and Commerce, Senator John Button (1985-87) to commercial manager and corporate strategy manager for SingTel Optus Pty Ltd (2000-06). In addition she is a Commissioner with the Australian Fisheries Management Authority, and Chairman of Directors of Streetwise Communications Limited, a national not-for-profit social communications agency specialising in researching and

communicating social issues to young people, Indigenous communities and people of culturally diverse backgrounds.

Deputy Chancellor, I present Ms Denise North and invite you to confer the title of Honorary Fellow of the University upon her.