

Mr Tony Sukkar AM

An honorary Fellowship of the University was conferred upon Tony Sukkar by the Chancellor, Ms Belinda Hutchinson AM, at a University of Sydney Business School graduation at 2.00pm on 6 June 2019.

Citation

Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present Mr Tony Sukkar AM to you for an Honorary Fellowship of the University, in recognition of his longstanding and continuing contributions to the University of Sydney in the context of capital works development in his role as member of the Buildings and Estates Committee, and for his championing of the growth and success of the Sydney University Football Club.

Tony was the first in his family to graduate from university, commencing a degree in electrical engineering at the University of NSW. He quickly realised that his interests were more in construction, so moved to the Bachelor of Building degree, where he graduated with Honours. This placed him on track to join his father and older brothers in the family's construction business.

Instead, upon graduation Tony took a role with Civil and Civic, a subsidiary of construction giant Lend Lease, followed by an appointment as a Senior Project Manager with Girvan Corporation. Following the collapse of the Girvan Corporation in 1990 during an economic downturn, Tony and his wife Josephine established Buildcorp. Over the ensuing years, they have built the company from a family business into a major force in the national construction industry.

With a staff of over 330 people and revenue over \$500 million, Buildcorp has delivered projects cumulatively worth over \$3 billion, including landmark projects in the health, education, hospitality, retail and commercial sectors. Buildcorp has been awarded Master Builder Association awards for every year it has been in business and now operates across the eastern seaboard of Australia, and is the only construction company to have been recognised with an Employer of Choice Award.

Tony was a member of the University's Buildings and Estates Committee for 8 years to 2018. During that time, he provided significant and valuable advice and strategic counsel to the University, and contributed extensively to the University's campus improvement program.

Uppermost in mind for Tony, and formalised within Buildcorp's company values, is a commitment to building productive and long-term relationships with local community, arts and sporting organisations and their people, with focus given to advocating for and enacting material advancements in gender equity both in the workforce and on the sporting field.

Tony played rugby for the Sydney University Football Club in 1985. Seven years later, following the establishment of Buildcorp he decided to sponsor the Club as he felt it had given him so much. Buildcorp has been the major sponsor of the Club since.

This is a joint passion he shares with his wife, Josephine, and Tony has devoted considerable energy and generosity to the support of the University's Football Club over many years, including establishing the Buildcorp Rugby Scholarship in 2011. Over the years, Buildcorp has also sponsored the Universities men's and women's cricket clubs, and sponsors the men's and women's rugby clubs of the universities of Melbourne and Queensland. In 2008, Tony was awarded a University Gold for his services to the rugby.

It has been a priority for both Tony and Josephine to support promising sporting talent from the amateur to national professional level, and to provide a pipeline that enables that talent to flourish in line with ambition and ability. In this capacity, Buildcorp was a major financial backer of the then relatively unknown Australian Rugby Union Women's 15s team, the Wallaroos. Through Buildcorp Tony has also ensured that the national women's rugby championships, the 'Buildcorp Super W' had the financial backing to be formed, creating an essential missing pathway for women from club rugby through to international distinction, as Wallaroos.

Tony has credited many of the values of rugby with helping him develop valuable, transferable skills into business. The values of teamwork, preparedness, integrity and the leadership he learned as part of a high functioning team and club.

Beyond rugby, Tony has contributed his experience, time and money to support not-for profit organisations. He served on the school council of Kambala Girls' School, Chairing its Property and Construction Committee, and is a director of the Buildcorp Foundation whose focus is on supporting mental health of Australians through their contributions to Lifeline Australia and Smiling Mind who will receive \$1.2 million to roll out mindfulness training to 400 NSW public schools by the end of next year.

In June 2017, Tony was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia in recognition of his significant service to the community through support for sporting, social welfare and cultural organisations, and to the construction sector.

Chancellor, I present to you Tony Sukkar and invite you to confer the title of Honorary Fellow of the University upon him.