

Professor David Oxtoby

Doctor of Laws *honoris causa*

Citation

Professor Oxtoby became the ninth President of Pomona College in July 2003. An internationally-known physical chemist, he had previously served as Dean of the Division of Physical Sciences at the University of Chicago, where he was William Rainey Harper Distinguished Service Professor. As Professor of Chemistry at Pomona College, he regularly teaches a course in environmental chemistry.

Born in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, Professor Oxtoby received his bachelor's degree in chemistry and physics *summa cum laude* from Harvard University in 1972, and his Ph.D. in chemistry from the University of California at Berkeley in 1975. He joined the faculty of the University of Chicago in 1977, becoming an award-winning teacher and scholar. As a research chemist, he is author or co-author of 165 scientific articles on such subjects as light scattering, chemical reaction dynamics and phase transitions; he has also co-authored two textbooks for introductory chemistry. He has been invited as guest lecturer to institutions around the globe, and served as keynote speaker at the liberal arts conference at Lingnan University in May 2009. He has been a visiting professor at the University of Paris, the University of Bristol, and the University of Sydney. His work has been recognized through fellowships from the Guggenheim, Sloan, Dreyfus, von Humboldt, Danforth, and National Science Foundations. He is a Fellow of the American Physical Society and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, as well as a member of the American Chemical Society.

President Oxtoby is a member of Phi Beta Kappa, has served on the Board of Argonne National Laboratory, and currently serves on the Boards of Toyota Technological Institute-Chicago, the Consortium on Financing Higher Education, the Claremont University Consortium Board of Overseers, the Association of American Colleges and Universities, and Harvard University's Board of Overseers. He was a member of the National Science Foundation's Mathematics and Physical Science Advisory Committee and the Advisory Committee on Cyberinfrastructure, and the Boards of Trustees of the Webb Schools and Bryn Mawr College. In 2005 he received an honorary degree from Occidental College. He has also traveled extensively in East Asia – China, Japan, Korea, Singapore, and Hong Kong – to strengthen Pomona's ties in the region.

Pomona is a private college of 1548 students, located in Claremont, southern California. Under President Oxtoby's leadership, the College has launched initiatives

in sustainability—including integrated academic and campus planning and an office of sustainability—completed three new academic buildings, and carried out renovations of several historic buildings. The College has maintained a commitment to meet the full cost of students' financial need through scholarships and financial aid, while replacing student loans with grants in order to make a Pomona education affordable to low-income and underrepresented students. Pomona College has established a parents program and set records for Annual Fund giving over the past three years. In addition, it adopted a new General Education curriculum, added two new departments, Computer Science and Media Studies, and added a number of faculty positions, with particular emphasis on interdisciplinary programs such as Neuroscience, Environmental Analysis, and Media Studies.

As a pianist, theater-lover and student of several foreign languages, President Oxtoby has been particularly supportive of the arts, leading efforts to increase resources, visibility and capacity. These efforts have resulted in a revitalization of the Pomona College Museum of Art, a new faculty appointment in creative writing, and a commitment to public art on campus. In 2009, Pomona established the Draper Center for Community Partnerships, which includes a long-term commitment to the Pomona College Academy for Youth Success that serves historically underrepresented high school students.

In recognition of Professor Oxtoby's dedication and significant contributions to education, we are honoured to welcome him on this occasion to Lingnan University today. Mr Chancellor, may I present Professor David Oxtoby to you for the conferment of the degree of Doctor of Laws *honoris causa*.

Written and delivered by Professor Richard Davis