

## News Release

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March 24, 2010

### New president to lead University of Calgary

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#### Renowned geomatics expert and leader Dr. Elizabeth Cannon to take the helm on July 1

A new chapter begins today for the University of Calgary, with the selection of the university's eighth President and Vice-Chancellor. The University of Calgary's Board of Governors today endorsed Dr. Elizabeth Cannon, a U of C triple alumna and current Dean of the Schulich School of Engineering, as the next President, effective July 1, 2010.

"The University of Calgary is now embarking upon a new era of momentum with a bold new leader," said Jack Perraton, Chair of the University of Calgary Board of Governors. "Elizabeth Cannon is both visionary and practical. Her international reputation and her local knowledge and expertise will serve this institution well as we continue to build one of the best universities in Canada and in the world."

"We conducted an international search, so I am especially proud to say that, Elizabeth, one of our own, was the best candidate from among a group of very talented candidates," Perraton added.

Elizabeth, a professor in the Department of Geomatics Engineering who has served as Dean of the University of Calgary's Schulich School of Engineering since 2006, has a long history of leadership at the University of Calgary and in the broader community. After earning her undergraduate degree in applied science from Acadia University and undergraduate engineering (BSc'84), master's (MSc'87) and doctoral (PhD'91) degrees at the University of Calgary, Elizabeth went on to become a professor in the engineering faculty.

In its consideration of candidates, Perraton said the Presidential Advisory Search Committee sought leaders who expressed passion and innovative ideas for improving on the University of Calgary's priorities and strengths, including a commitment to student success, promotion of excellence in research and scholarship, interdisciplinary research and education, and building upon the university's strong connection to the greater Calgary community. Personal qualities the committee looked for in a new president included a proven track record of team building and transparency, outstanding communication skills, integrity, sensitivity and respect for diversity.

"I speak on behalf of the 17 other members of the Presidential Advisory Search Committee when I say that it has been a privilege to be involved in choosing the person who will move the University of Calgary forward," Perraton said. "I sincerely thank the members of the search committee for their time and commitment to selecting the new president."

In the research community, Elizabeth is known as a leader whose innovative work focuses on geomatics engineering and the commercial application of geomatics technology. She has been involved as an expert at the frontiers of global positioning systems (GPS) since 1984 and her work has resulted in advancements in satellite-based navigation systems worldwide. She has served on several dozen public, private and community boards, including the Canada Foundation for Innovation where she is Interim Chair, the Royal Society of Canada Council and the Enbridge Income Fund. Elizabeth has also led several very successful initiatives designed to increase the number of women and girls involved in science and engineering.

"There are great things ahead for the University of Calgary and I am honoured to lead the university towards an exciting future," said Elizabeth. "This institution has come a long way, gaining recognition nationally and internationally and becoming known as one of Canada's top research-intensive universities. Have we achieved our full potential? Not yet. So I look forward to working with the incredibly talented students, staff and faculty here to realize that potential."

Elizabeth will take over from Interim President Dr. Warren Veale on July 1, 2010. She becomes the first female president of the University of Calgary. Elizabeth, 47, is married to geomatics engineering professor Gérard Lachapelle, and has two children: a

daughter, Sara, 21, currently studying engineering at Cornell University, and a son, René, 18, an economics student at Queen's University.

A full media package, including biography and downloadable photos of Elizabeth Cannon, as well as University of Calgary history and past president biographies, is available at: [www.ucalgary.ca/presidentelect](http://www.ucalgary.ca/presidentelect).



## Biographical Profile: Dr. Elizabeth Cannon

University of Calgary President-elect Dr. Elizabeth Cannon is the current Dean of the Schulich School of Engineering and a professor in the Department of Geomatics Engineering at the University of Calgary.

As Dean, Elizabeth set out to propel the Schulich School of Engineering into the top rankings of engineering schools in the country, and succeeded. She has led the expansion and renovation of the building complex, the development of critical interdisciplinary research programs, enriched student leadership programs and accelerated career support for future engineers. She has streamlined academic programs and capitalized on the engineering school's strength and relevance as the "green engineering school in the heart of the oil patch." These well-orchestrated achievements resulted from the focused and disciplined implementation of a community-endorsed strategic plan.

Elizabeth is a leader who believes in community involvement, creative problem-solving and transparent processes. Her ability to inspire confidence, build pride and support positive change has attracted attention from the outset of her career. Elizabeth was presented the 1993 YWCA Women of Distinction Award for Science and Technology. She was awarded the APEGGA Early Achievement Award in 1994 and the Canadian Council of Professional Engineers' Young Engineer Achievement Award in 1995. In 1998, she was selected as one of Canada's Top 40 Under 40. In 2002, she received the Pioneer Award from the Wired Woman Society of Canada, the Minerva Award from the Alberta Women's Science Network, an NSERC Steacie Memorial Fellowship and the Community Service Award from the University of Calgary Faculty Association. In 2006 she was named one of Canada's Top 100 Most Powerful Women, and in 2009 she was awarded the ASTech Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Alberta Science and Technology Community. In 2010 she will be receiving an honorary degree from Acadia University.

She holds a Bachelor of Applied Science in mathematics from Acadia University as well as a Bachelor of Science, Master of Science and Doctorate in geomatics engineering from the University of Calgary.

Elizabeth has been involved as a research expert on the frontiers of Global Positioning Systems (GPS) since 1984 in both industrial and academic environments, specializing in satellite navigation for land, air and marine applications. Her research has encompassed the development of new satellite navigation methods, algorithms and integrated systems that have been applied to such areas as vehicular navigation, precision farming and aircraft flight inspection. The results of her research have been commercialized through the licensing of software to more than 200 agencies worldwide. In 2001, she received the Johannes Kepler Award from the U.S. Institute of Navigation for her outstanding contributions to satellite-based navigation. That same year, she received the Order of the University from the Bauman Moscow State Technical University, Russia.

Elizabeth is a Professional Engineer who is a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Engineering, the Royal Society of Canada, the U.S. Institute of Navigation and is a Member of the Russian Academy of Navigation.

Her research achievements have been balanced with a long history of serving on public, private and community organizations, including terms as past president of the U.S.-based Institute of Navigation, board member and Interim Chair of the Canada Foundation for Innovation, board member of the Royal Society of Canada Council and trustee of the Enbridge Income Fund. Previously, she was a member of the Alberta Science and Research Authority; the Alberta ICT Institute; the TELUS World of Science board of directors; the board of the Alberta Ingenuity Fund; the Council of the Association of Professional Engineers, Geologists and Geophysicists of Alberta; the University Advisory Group of Industry Canada; the Auto21 NCE board of directors; the Alberta Research Council and the Top 40 Under 40 advisory board. Elizabeth has been involved in a number of Natural Sciences and Engineering Council of Canada



Dr. Elizabeth Cannon  
President and Vice-Chancellor  
[High-Resolution Photo for Download](#)

(NSERC) committees and task forces, including the Committee on Research Partnerships, the IP Policy Committee and the Committee on Grants and Scholarships.

From 1997 to 2002, Elizabeth held the NSERC/Petro-Canada Chair for Women in Science and Engineering for the Prairie Region where she worked to promote science and engineering to girls. In this capacity, Elizabeth focused on raising public awareness about opportunities for science and engineering careers in addition to conducting research with colleagues into the reasons and influencing factors for men and women to select these careers. She also developed innovative programs, such as Cybermentor, Explore IT and Women in Engineering Day to encourage and retain women in science and engineering-based fields. Her community outreach work has engaged partners across all disciplines and walks of life, embracing creativity, social research and the politics of gender and diversity.

Elizabeth Cannon is married to geomatics engineering professor Gérard Lachapelle, and has two children in university, Sara and René.

