

For immediate release
Wednesday, 11 February 2015

Honorary degrees awarded at the University of Bristol – Thursday, 12 February

The University of Bristol is awarding honorary degrees to Professor Viv Bennett and Laura and Harry Marshall at degree ceremonies taking place tomorrow [12 February] in the Wills Memorial Building.

Professor Viv Bennett, Director of Nursing at the Department of Health and Public Health England, is being awarded a Doctor of Laws degree.

She trained as a nurse in Oxford in 1976 and worked in children's nursing before training as a health visitor in the early 1980s. Professor Bennett worked as a health visitor in Oxford while studying for a BA and then completed her Masters in health and social policy at the University of Bristol in 1996.

In January 2012, Professor Bennett was appointed as the Department of Health's Director of Nursing and the government's Principal Adviser on Public Health Nursing, providing high-quality and independent nursing advice to ministers and officials on policy issues and public health nursing.

She was also appointed Director of Nursing for Public Health England in September 2012. She has had a special interest in services for children and young people in all of the clinical and leadership roles she has undertaken. Professor Bennett is also a visiting professor at King's College London.

The founders of Bristol-based Icon Films, **Laura and Harry Marshall**, are being recognised with a Doctor of Laws honorary degree.

Laura and Harry are the Managing and Creative Directors respectively of the television production company, which they set-up in the basement of their house in Bristol in 1990.

Icon Films grew over the next 25 years from a staff of two to more than 100 and has created over 300 hours of programming, with its content broadcast throughout the world. Films made by Icon have received Emmy, Grierson and Christ awards, as well as prizes at numerous film festivals.

It's described as 'a leading light' in the creative economy of Bristol, which houses the world's greatest concentration of natural history filmmakers.

Laura started her career working for photographers Henri Cartier Bresson and Martine Franck, filmmaker Roger Graef and literary agents Murray and Gina Pollinger, while Harry began a career in television in London in the 1980s on the arts flagship *The South Bank Show* and then at Channel 4.

An honorary degree is a major accolade, awarded in recognition of outstanding achievement and distinction in a field or activity consonant with the University's mission.

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Notes to editors:

- Professor Viv Bennett will receive his honorary degree during the 11.15am ceremony in the Wills Memorial Building.
- Laura and Harry Marshall will receive their honorary degrees during the 2.30pm ceremony in the Wills Memorial Building.

Photography/filming opportunities involving Honorary Graduates are very limited. If you wish to photograph/film them you **must** contact the Public Relations Office in advance. Under no circumstances should a member of the press enter the Great Hall without prior permission.

Please note the honorary graduand normally receives their degree approximately 40 minutes after the start of the ceremony, before leaving the hall for photographs.

The speeches delivered by the public orators at each ceremony are available on request, as are the official photographs.

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