

Dr. Bondar Key to the City presentation

June 30, 2017

[AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY]

I would like to begin by recognizing our First Nation partners in Garden River First Nation, Batchewana First Nation, the urban aboriginal population here in Sault Ste. Marie and the Métis Nation. It is important to acknowledge the Robinson – Huron Treaty (1850) and the Pennefather Treaty (1859) and that these lands are the ancestral and historic lands of the Anishnabec and commonly known to them as Bawating.

Dr. Roberta Bondar is an exceptional person. She is the first Canadian woman in space, the world's first neurologist in space and she has pioneered space medicine research. We all know that astronauts are pretty exceptional people but amongst that group of people, with all of their respective accomplishments, Dr. Bondar is a standout as one of the most distinguished. She is a medical doctor, a photographer, an author and she has followed in her family's tradition of excellence in teaching.

She was in Sault Ste. Marie in April of this year, as part of a seven city tour across northern Ontario, called Earth Matters, a partnership between Science North and The Roberta Bondar Foundation. Throughout the tour, Dr. Bondar spoke of how it is important to ask questions. Her career embodies the curiosity and the creativity that both art and science require.

Dr. Bondar's distinctions are many: Officer of the Order of Canada, the Order of Ontario, the NASA Space Medal, induction into the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame and into the International Women's Forum's Hall of Fame, over two dozen honorary doctorates from Canadian and American Universities, and she served as Chancellor of Trent University for six years. She is also the recipient of the Sault Ste. Marie Medal of Merit and an inductee of our Walk of Fame.

Dr. Bondar is a role model in the truest sense of the word. As a father of a daughter and a father expecting another daughter, I am grateful to Dr. Bondar for her example.

I think it is important to note, however, that Dr. Bondar is not simply a role model for young women. She is a role model for all of us: men and women, young and old. Throughout her career, through her conduct, through what she has done and what she has accomplished, she is showing us how to be good citizens, how to lead, how to live your own life while giving back to the communal life that we share. That is a long way of saying, Dr. Bondar, that I not only am I grateful that my daughters can learn about you and from you, I am grateful that I can and I suggest that we all can. Thank you.

Dr. Bondar was born and raised in Sault Ste. Marie and has remained just as committed to her hometown as it is to her. It is my pleasure to bestow upon her one more honour, an honour that as a young girl she saw bestowed upon Gene Autry and hoped she one day might be a recipient.

Dr. Bondar, that day has come, I ask you to come forward as I present to you the Key to the City of Sault Ste. Marie.