



THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

UWinnipeg Announces New Dean for Global College & \$80,000 Peace Education Fund for Immigrants/War-Affected Refugees

WINNIPEG— Dr. Lloyd Axworthy, President and Vice-Chancellor of The University of Winnipeg, today announced the appointment of Dr. James Christie as the inaugural Dean of the University's Global College and the establishment of an \$80,000 Peace Education Fund, through the Global College, to support immigrants/war-affected refugees pursuing higher education.

"The Global College has struck a chord with students and citizens around the world," said Axworthy. "Providing a research and dialogue hub that will enable today's keenest minds to focus on internationally-relevant solutions to global warming, infectious disease, and human rights-related issues. Jim Christie brings to bear his years on the global stage, his understanding of higher education, and his compassion for the human condition. We are honoured that he has agreed to take on this new and timely challenge."

A leader in the movement for global democracy, UN reform, and human rights, Christie chairs the Council of the World Federalist Movement (a 2002 Nobel Peace Prize nominee) and serves as a Director of the Institute for Global Policy, both based in New York. Closer to home, he has co-chaired, with Dr. Elizabeth Barot of UNESCO, the Group of 78, an informal association of prominent Canadians concerned with global policy issues.

"The world's people—young, old, scholars, community people, business leaders—need more opportunities to share hope, to engage in dialogue, and to work together to solve pressing global issues," said Dean Christie. "Unique opportunities for local and international students to study with our own experts and visiting scholars from around the world are only possible through a unique and much-needed initiative like the Global College. The positive effects of such engagement will extend far beyond our walls, into the larger world. This is an incredible opportunity to participate in global change."

In less than a year since its establishment (February 2005), the Global College has attracted new funding for the benefit of University of Winnipeg students and faculty, as well as the broader community, for research and opportunities in the fields of international internships, northern environmental research exchanges, community engagement, conferences, and forums on global citizenship, human rights, and democracy. Also announced today was a gift from President Lloyd Axworthy and matching private donations to establish a new \$80,000 Norman J. and Gwen Axworthy Peace Education Fund. This new fund is dedicated to the support of immigrants/war-affected refugees, enabling them to apply for financial assistance to support participation in any UWinnipeg course or program. These funds are in addition to the previously announced \$500,000 gift from distinguished alumnus Douglas Leatherdale, (United College Class of '57) to establish the Leatherdale Global Internships, ensuring that the Global College is a vital nexus where students, faculty, NGOs, business people, and the community—local, national, and international—can research, discuss, and debate their diverse perspectives on issues ranging from global citizenship to human rights to climate change.

Prior to his 2005 appointment as The University of Winnipeg's Dean of Theology, Christie was most recently Senior Minister of Southminster United Church in Ottawa. A bilingual native of Salaberry-de-Valleyfield, Quebec, he has pursued studies at Bishop's University, McGill (Birk's Award; University Scholar), the United Theological College in Montreal (Nordberg Prize for Contextual Theology), and the Toronto School of Theology. Christie has practiced ministry in Montreal, New York State, Toronto, and Ottawa. He has also worked in teaching, academic administration, and the investment industry.

In addition, Christie had held several senior positions, including Interim General Secretary for Ecumenism and Interfaith Dialogue for the United Church of Canada and is one of three Vice-Presidents of the Canadian Council of Churches. In February 2003, he engaged in a national church leaders' mission to study the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Uganda and Tanzania. During the funeral of John Paul II, he served as a media resource in Rome to the Canadian Ambassador to the Holy See.

Together with members of the local and global communities—Christie will now lead The University of Winnipeg's Global College in its commitment to help define Canada's international responsibilities, raise the profile of international concerns both at home and abroad, and chart a course of action for the challenges of the new century.

A college without borders, the Global College is an action-oriented multi-disciplinary option for Canadian and International students, bringing them face to face with visiting scholars from around the world and engaging them to discover our role within the global community, our responsibility to protect, and our responsibility to act. [For more information on the Global College, visit globalcollege.uwinnipeg.ca]

The Global College is divided into three distinct areas of study: Health, Security & Human Potential; Human Rights & Global Studies; and, Climate Studies. Supporting and under girding these areas is the Global Information Commons Centre.

Some of the world's leading authorities on human rights, international affairs, education, and information—like Madeleine Albright, Mamadou Khan, Paul Heinbecker, and Roberta Bondar—have joined the Global College providing their advice and guidance on issues relative to their expertise. With his years of experience in medicine, politics, and community relations, Dr. Rey Pagtakhan continues as an invaluable resource to the Global College, its local and international advisory boards, and to the wider community as the College's principal ambassador.

Christie will continue in his role as the Dean of Theology for The University of Winnipeg, directing the faculty's theological programs and graduate studies.

Located in the heart of downtown, The University of Winnipeg is a compact, diverse, multicultural academic community committed to access and excellence. Ranked by our graduates in Maclean's magazine University Graduate Survey (November 15, 2004) in the Top Ten of all Canadian universities when asked about their "Entire Educational Experience." UWinnipeg is home to more than 8,900 full- and part-time students.

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For more information, please contact:

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Background _____

Dr. James Christie

Prior to his 2005 appointment as The University of Winnipeg's Dean of Theology, Dr. Christie was most currently Senior Minister of Southminster United Church in Ottawa. A bilingual native of Salaberry-de-Valleyfield, Quebec, he has pursued studies at Bishop's University, McGill (Birk's Award; University Scholar), the United Theological College in Montreal (Nordberg Prize for Contextual Theology), and the Toronto School of Theology. His MA thesis in social ethics, *Love and Fine Thinking: H.G. Wells and the World State*, focused on issues of religion and world order. His doctoral thesis, *Beyond Tolerance: Christians and Jews in Dialogue*, explored historical, biblical, and theological issues in interfaith relations and proposed a 'grass-roots' model for interfaith dialogue.

Dr. Christie has practiced ministry in Montreal, New York State, Toronto, and Ottawa. He has also worked in teaching, academic administration, and the investment industry. Academically, Dr. Christie has served as a member of the Emmanuel College Council in Toronto; developed and taught short courses for Queen's University and the United Church of Canada in Faith, Culture and Politics; designed and taught Queen's first course on science and religion, *Science, Religion and Society: An Emerging Dialogue*; and, in March of 2003, was theologian to the Justice Department of Canada Forum on Genetic Futures. Dr. Christie is a member of the Board of Governors of the United Theological College in Montreal and Vice-Chair of the Governing Board of the Montreal School of Theology, where he heads a task force to establish a Doctor of Ministry program. Dr. Christie was a Founding Director of Earth Day in Canada in 1990.

In the wider church, he has held several senior positions, including Chairperson of the Presbytery of York, President of Toronto Conference, and Interim General Secretary for Ecumenism and Interfaith Dialogue for the United Church of Canada. He has represented the United Church on the Faith and Witness Commission of the Canadian Council of Churches and was a long-time director of the Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Toronto. He is a member of both the Ottawa Chapter of the World Conference on Religion and Peace and the Christian-Jewish Dialogue of the National Capital Region. Dr. Christie is one of three Vice-Presidents of the Canadian Council of Churches. In February, 2003, he engaged in a national church leaders' mission to study the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Uganda and Tanzania. He has also served as a media resource in Rome to the Canadian Ambassador to the Holy See during the funeral of John Paul II.

An internationalist, Dr. Christie is a leader in the movement for global democracy, UN reform, and human rights, chairing the Council of the World Federalist Movement (a 2002 Nobel Peace Prize nominee) and serving as a Director of the Institute for Global Policy, both based in New York. Closer to home, he has co-chaired, with Dr. Elizabeth Barot of UNESCO, the Group of 78, an informal association of prominent Canadians concerned with global policy issues.

His articles, essays, and reviews have been published in *The United Church Observer*, *The Practice of Ministry in Canada*, *The Canadian World Federalist*, *Mondial*, *The Federalist Debate*, *Dialogue*, *Context*, *Pilgrimage* (the Journal of the C.S. Lewis Society), and *The Ottawa Citizen*.

Dr. Christie and his wife, Jan, have three sons.