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## MEDIA RELEASE

# RAYMOND McFEETORS TO RECEIVE HONORARY DOCTORATE DEGREE

*Great West Lifeco president to be recognized for business acumen, commitment to community*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – JULY 25, 2007**

**WINNIPEG, MB** – From humble beginnings growing up in a farming community in southwestern Manitoba, **Ray McFeetors** has achieved international recognition as head of the largest insurance company in Canada. The President and CEO of Great-West Lifeco. Inc. is being recognized for his great achievements in the business world and dedication to community by being awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Laws by The University of Winnipeg.

McFeetors, who joined Great-West Life as a trainee in the Group Division, is a Collegiate ('65) and University of Winnipeg graduate (BA '68). Since taking over the helm of Great-West Life in 1992, McFeetors has overseen the acquisitions of London Life in 1997 and Canada Life in 2003 as well as the expansion into the wealth management sector. He is also Honorary Colonel for the Royal Winnipeg Rifles and served as a member of the honour guard at the royal wedding of Prince Charles and Camilla Parker Bowles in 2005.

"Ray exemplifies home-grown success. Manitoba born, Ray studied at The University of Winnipeg and rose up through the ranks to lead the largest insurance company in Canada – headquartered in Winnipeg," said **Dr. Lloyd Axworthy, President & Vice-Chancellor of The University of Winnipeg**. "And he embodies what the University is all about through his community spirit, his success and his everlasting enthusiasm for his alma mater."

McFeetors credits his time at UWinnipeg for shaping the person he is today.

"Your university years are the best years of your life," he says fondly. "There's no question that the training I got at The University of Winnipeg has stayed with me – my ability to speak in public and communicate came out of my experience in Theatre and emceeding comedy shows in Convocation Hall."

McFeetors is one of nine people who will receive University of Winnipeg honorary doctorate degrees at a Special Convocation ceremony Friday, Sept. 14, 2007 at 3:00 p.m. in Convocation Hall. He is the first individual to be named an honorary degree recipient. The University will announce the other recipients in the weeks leading up to its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Homecoming Event, slated for Sept. 13-16.

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*Located in the heart of downtown, The University of Winnipeg is a compact, diverse, multicultural academic community committed to access and excellence. Home to more than 9,200 full- and part-time students, UWinnipeg has been ranked by our graduates in the Top Ten of all Canadian universities when asked about their "Entire Educational Experience" (Macleans' Graduate Survey, June 2006). The Globe & Mail 2006 Report Card gives The University of Winnipeg an overall 'A' grade in the areas of quality of education, teaching quality, class sizes, faculty-student interaction, and the availability of faculty outside classroom hours. Find out why. Visit [www.uwinnipeg.ca](http://www.uwinnipeg.ca). Celebrate The University of Winnipeg's 40th Anniversary at Homecoming - September 13-16, 2007. For more information or to register, visit <http://40th.uwinnipeg.ca>*

**For more information, please contact:**

Ilana Simon, Communications Officer

The University of Winnipeg

T: 204.786.9930 C: 204.782.3279 [i.simon@uwinnipeg.ca](mailto:i.simon@uwinnipeg.ca)

**Backgrounder:**

**Raymond McFeetors, President and CEO of Great-West Lifeco Inc.**

Ask Raymond McFeetors what it's like heading up the mammoth Great-West Life Assurance Company and its subsidiaries, and his unassuming nature shines through.

"I'm just an employee like everyone else," McFeetors, President and CEO of Great-West Lifeco Inc. responds matter-of-factly. "Everyone has an important role to play. Somebody's got to be company president. Now it's my turn."

Since 1992, McFeetors has been at the helm of one of Canada's leading life and health insurers. He has overseen the acquisitions of London Life in 1997 and Canada Life in 2003 and the expansion into the wealth management sector.

Just after graduating from The University of Winnipeg in 1968 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics, he began his career at Great-West Life as a trainee in the Group Division – never imagining that he'd one day become President. As President, McFeetors has propelled Great West Lifeco to become the largest insurance company in Canada, employing more than 18,600 people, including 3,000 in Manitoba.

McFeetors credits his time at UWinnipeg for shaping the person he is today.

"Your university years are the best years of your life," he says fondly. "I had a lot of fun at The University of Winnipeg, especially living in residence. I met a lot of great friends and have so many wonderful memories. There's no question that the training I got at The University of Winnipeg has stayed with me – my ability to speak in public and communicate came out of my experience in Theatre and emceeing comedy shows in Convocation Hall."

McFeetors also picked up valuable work habits during his Liberal Arts education.

"University teaches a disciplined approach to problems or issues. It provides conditioning and trains you and allows you to mature," he says, adding, "it also exposes you to different things you didn't think about and the world is opened up to you."

Not surprisingly, McFeetors was humbled by news of the Honorary Doctorate degree being bestowed upon him by The University of Winnipeg at Special Convocation.

"I am very pleased and honored. No doubt, this is a great honor," he said, adding the University is experiencing an exciting period of growth and expansion under the leadership of Lloyd Axworthy.

McFeetors was born in Holland, Manitoba and raised in the farming communities of Holland and Newdale in Southwestern, Manitoba. Prior to entering The Collegiate and then UWinnipeg, McFeetors spent three years in the Royal Canadian Air Force as an Airborne Communications Technician. He continues in his commitment to Canada's military as Honorary Colonel for the Royal Winnipeg Rifles.

In his official capacity, McFeetors acts as liaison between the unit and its Colonel-in-Chief, HRH the Prince of Wales. McFeetors proudly represented the Royal Winnipeg Rifles and all Canadians as an honour guard on the stairs of St. George's Chapel for the wedding blessing of Prince Charles and Camilla Parker Bowles in April 2005.

As well, McFeetors' passion for planes has never waned. He is a licensed pilot who enjoys flying his Cessna 182 and in mid-July recounted a memorable flight he made over Niagara Falls.

McFeetors is deeply dedicated to his community and serves as a director on numerous corporate boards as well as community groups. He joined The University of Winnipeg Foundation in 2003 as

honorary member of the Campaign Cabinet and received the University's Distinguished Alumni Award in October 2005 for his great achievements in the business world and in the community.

In November 2005, McFeetors was presented with the B'nai Brith Canada Award of Merit, which recognizes individuals who have contributed significantly to the social, political or business fabric of our community and of our nation.

"Ray exemplifies home-grown success. Manitoba born, Ray studied at The University of Winnipeg and rose up through the ranks to lead the largest insurance company in Canada- headquartered in Winnipeg," said Dr. Lloyd Axworthy, President & Vice-Chancellor of The University of Winnipeg. "And he embodies what the University is all about through his community spirit, his success and his everlasting enthusiasm for his alma mater."

McFeetors has led Great-West Life to many notable achievements:

- Ranked No. 1 in the top 100 companies by Manitoba Business magazine (2006)
- Ranked ninth by revenue among the Globe & Mail's Report on Business Magazine Top 1000 (2006)
- Named one of Canada's top 100 employers by The Guide to Canada's Best Places to Work (2004)
- Named outstanding large business by the Manitoba Chamber of Commerce (2001)

McFeetors shares his knowledge as a director to a number of business and community organizations including:

- Member, The University of Winnipeg Campaign Honorary Cabinet
- Member, the National Advisory Council for the Canadian Museum of Human Rights
- Member, Canadian Council of Chief Executives
- Past Member, The Associates of the Faculty of Management, University of Manitoba
- Past Member, The Business Council of Manitoba
- Campaign Co-Chair, Cancer Care Manitoba Foundation
- National Governor, Shaw Festival of Art Theatre
- President's Council & Board of Governors, The University of Western Ontario
- Director, Manitoba Telecom Service Inc.
- Supporter, Friends of Upper Fort Garry

For his great achievements in the business world and his commitment the well-being of the broader community, The University of Winnipeg is honored to present Ray McFeetors with an Honorary Doctor of Laws at Special Convocation September 14, 2007.