



**Baroness Valerie Amos**

### **IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Baroness Valerie Amos, Award-Winning Actress CCH Pounder Head Stellar List of Special Awardees for UG's Diamond (60<sup>th</sup>) Anniversary

*University of Guyana / Greater Georgetown / Guyana / Monday, November 6, 2023/Baroness Valerie Amos, Award-Winning Actress CCH Pounder Head Stellar List of Special Awardees for UG's Diamond (60<sup>th</sup>) Anniversary to be Conferred and Speak at Graduation Ceremonies set for November 9<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>*

*Baroness Valerie Amos, along with world-renowned award-winning actress CCH Pounder, heads a stellar list of 10 awardees in this year's University of Guyana conferral of Honorary Degrees. Both women who have distinguished themselves internationally were born in Guyana.*

**Baroness Amos of Brondesbury, London**, was born in British Guiana [now Guyana]. She is a British politician, the first woman of African Caribbean descent to serve in a British Cabinet and as Leader of the House of Lords (2003–07).

Baroness Amos worked initially for Local Governments in London and then from 1989 to 1994, headed the Equal Opportunities Commission. In August 1997, she was made a life peer by the then Labour Prime Minister Tony Blair. Baroness Amos served as; the government's spokesperson for social security, international development and women's issues (1998-2001), a Minister in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office with responsibility for Sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean, Britain's Overseas Territories, and the Commonwealth, Consular and Personnel Affairs. In May 2003, Baroness Amos was appointed International Development Secretary, thus becoming the first black woman to serve in a British Cabinet. Following the death of Lord Williams of Mostyn in September 2003, Amos was named Leader of the House of Lords and Lord President of the Council, a post she held until 2007. She later served as British High Commissioner to Australia (2009–10) and as head of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2010–15). She became Director of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at the University of London. In 2015 and 2019, she was elected to become Master at the University College, Oxford; becoming the first woman to hold the post and the first black person to head a college at the University of Oxford.



Baroness Amos sits on a number of international foundation boards including the MasterCard Foundation, UN Foundation and International Peace Institute.

Baroness Amos is the first person of colour to be appointed as a Companion (Knight or Lady) to the Garter. (Haile Selassie I, the late Emperor of Ethiopia, was a royal member of the Order) and was installed in June 2022. The Order of the Garter is the oldest and most senior Order of Chivalry in Britain, established by King Edward III nearly 700 years ago. The Order includes The King, who is Sovereign of the Garter, several senior Members of the Royal Family, and twenty-four Knights or Ladies chosen in recognition of their work. ***Baroness Amos will be conferred with the prestigious Honorary Doctor of Laws and will address the graduation on November 10<sup>th</sup> at 10 AM at the University's 3<sup>rd</sup> graduation ceremony.***



***Award-winning Actress CCH Pounder (Robert Hale photo)***

The award-winning actress can currently be seen as "Mo'at" in James Cameron's AVATAR: THE WAY OF WATER and in the limited series, FULL CIRCLE on Max. Upcoming projects include RUSTIN for Netflix and ANANSI BOYS for Amazon. Pounder portrayed "Dr. Loretta Wade" on the CBS series, NCIS: NEW ORLEANS for seven seasons and other notable projects including; Smithsonian Channel's 100 YEARS OF SLAVERY as well as the television shows THE GOOD FIGHT, WAREHOUSE 13, SONS OF ANARCHY, REVENGE, BROTHERS, LAW & ORDER: SVU and HBO's THE NO. 1 LADIES' DETECTIVE AGENCY, which garnered Pounder her fourth Emmy nomination. For seven years, Pounder portrayed "Claudette Wymys" on the critically acclaimed FX series, THE SHIELD, which earned her many accolades including an Emmy nomination, the MIB Prism Award," two Golden Satellite Awards and the "Genii Excellence in TV Award." Other honours for Pounder



include an Emmy nomination for her role as Dr. Angela Hicks on the NBC series ER and an Emmy nomination for her role in FOX's The X-FILES.

In addition, she received a Grammy Award nomination for "Best Spoken Word Album" for GROW OLD ALONG WITH ME, THE BEST IS YET TO BE and won an AUDIE, the Audio Publishers Association's top honour, for WOMEN IN THE MATERIAL WORLD. Film credits include HOME AGAIN, RAIN, PRIZZI'S HONOR, POSTCARDS FROM THE EDGE, ROBOCOP 3, SLIVER, TALES FROM THE CRYPT: DEMON KNIGHT, FACE/OFF, END OF DAYS, MORTAL INSTRUMENTS: CITY OF BONES, ORPHAN, AVATAR, GODZILLA: KING OF THE MONSTERS and her breakout role in BAGDAD CAFÉ.

Originally from Georgetown, Guyana, in 2016, Pounder received The Cacique's Crown of Honour, the second highest award in the Order of Service of Guyana. A graduate of Ithaca College, she received an Honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts from the school, was their 2010 Commencement Speaker and in 2021, she received Ithaca College Alumni Association's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Pounder serves on the Board of the African Millennium Foundation and was a founding member of Artists for a New South Africa. An advocate of the arts, she is active in the Creative Coalition and recent accolades for Pounder include the Visionary Leadership Award in Performing Arts from the Museum of the African Diaspora (MOAD) in San Francisco, the 2015 Carney Awards, the Lifetime Achievement Award from Chase Brexton Health Care in Baltimore, 2015 Honoree at the Grand Performances Gala in Los Angeles, the 2016 SweetArts Performing Arts honoree from the Contemporary Arts Center in New Orleans, the National Urban League's 2017 Women of Power Award and the 2018 Bob Marley Award from AFUWI (American Foundation for the University of the West Indies).

In addition to her prolific acting career and advocacy, Pounder has been extensively involved with the arts as a patron, collector, gallery owner and museum founder. Pounder's collection consists of Caribbean and African artists and artists of the African Diaspora. Her collection is heavily concentrated in the area of Contemporary Art but also includes traditional African sculptures. In 1992, Pounder and her husband, the late Boubacar Koné, founded and built the Musée Boribana, the first privately owned contemporary museum in Dakar Senegal, which they gifted to that nation in 2014. She was named in 2022 a Commander of The National Order of the Lion (*Ordre national du Lion du Sénégal*) the highest order awarded by the government of Senegal. Pounder's personal collection contains over 500 works of art, many of which she has loaned to Xavier University of Louisiana for a series of exhibitions and some of which were on exhibit at Somerset House in England, Kent State Museum, The Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History in Detroit, MI and The DuSable Black History Museum and Education Center in Chicago.

***Pounder will receive the University of Guyana's distinguished Honorary Doctorate for Excellence in Arts along with Guyana-based visual artist Bernadette Persaud on Saturday, November 11<sup>th</sup> at 10 am at the University's 5<sup>th</sup> graduation ceremony.***



*Guyana-based Visual Artist Bernadette Persaud*

Flautist and folklorist, Keith Waite, who could not receive his award in 2022, as well as renowned Caribbean linguist duo; Jeanette and the late Richard Allsopp will be conferred at these graduations.



*Flautist and folklorists Keith Waite*



*Renowned Caribbean Linguist duo Jeanette Allsopp and the Late Richard Allsopp*



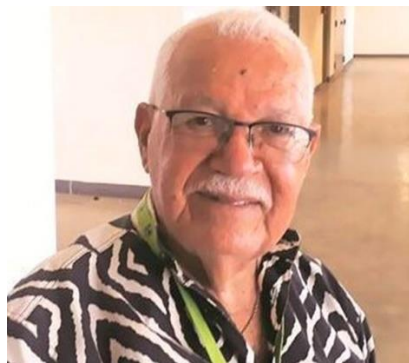
*Internationally-acclaimed Karateka Shotokan Frank Woon-A-Tai*



*Legendary Test Cricketer Rohan Kanhai*

Additionally, this year, three outstanding sportsmen will also be awarded Honorary Doctorates in Sport. These are; veteran sports commentator Joseph “Reds” Perreira, internationally-acclaimed karateka Shotokan Frank Woon-A-Tai and legendary Test cricketer Rohan Kanhai from Port Mourant, Berbice.





*Veteran Sports Commentator Joseph "Reds" Pereira*

To round out the list of Honorary Doctorates for this year are two icons of business - international shipping magnate and UG alumnus, Kenneth Singh and manufacturing and construction czar and philanthropist, Mr Abdool Sattaar Gafoor.



*International Shipping Magnate and UG Alumnus Kenneth Singh*



*Construction Tzar and Philanthropist Mr Abdool Sattaar Gafoor*



The University's Selection Committee for Special Awards will be releasing features on each of the awardees throughout the graduation period. The selections were made over a year-long process and expanded to ten (10) for this 60th anniversary year only. Nominations for honorary doctorates must be made through a faculty in the University at least one year in advance of the award to allow for the various approval steps and background research to be robustly conducted. Other categories of awards are expected to be made during the course of anniversary year 2023-2024. The University extends congratulations to this year's awardees.

The University of Guyana is set to graduate close to three thousand graduands, the largest in the sixty-year history of the University. As the Guyana's state University, which turned 60 on October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023 preparations are in high gear as the premier tertiary educational institution, hosts its 57th Convocation Ceremonies from November 9 to 11 2023 for the Turkeyen Campus and November 18, 2023, for the Berbice Campus.

Six ceremonies, two each day, for graduands of the Turkeyen Campus will be held at the National Cultural Centre (NCC) in Georgetown from Thursday November 9<sup>th</sup> to Saturday November 11<sup>th</sup>. The ceremony for the UGBC graduands will be held on Saturday, November 18, 2023, at 15:00 h (3:00 P.M.) on the University Lawns, Berbice Campus, Tain Settlement.

The ceremonies will be blended with the large majority of the graduands attending face-to-face and the remaining participating virtually.

The public is invited to celebrate with the University of Guyana at this year's very special 60th anniversary graduation events which will be streamed live on the University's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/uniofguyana> and UG Broadcasting Service at <https://broadcasting.uog.edu.gy/>. They will also be covered by local and international media.

###

### UG IN BRIEF

The University of Guyana, now in its 60th year, was founded in October 1963. "UG" as it is fondly referred to offers 160 plus programmes in over 60 disciplines in online, face-to-face or blended formats. UG delivers in a Guyana-based system across eight campuses. It is the largest, oldest, most advanced and only state University in Guyana with a student population of over 10,000.

"UG" has provided education, training and research for over 55,000 alumni over its 60-year history. UG's national and global impact and footprint are significant. Its graduates have risen to populate the

# DECC



## Department of Events, Conferences and Communication

Office of the Vice Chancellor, *University of Guyana*

Turkeyen, Greater Georgetown, Guyana

☎ 592-623-5104 | ✉ [decc@uog.edu.gy](mailto:decc@uog.edu.gy) | 🌐 [www.uog.edu.gy](http://www.uog.edu.gy)



UNIVERSITY of GUYANA

commanding heights of national, regional and international organisations of repute in over 155 different disciplines. The mission of the University is to discover, generate, disseminate and apply knowledge of the highest standard for the service of the community, the nation, and all mankind within an atmosphere of academic freedom, innovation and universal respect.

UG's forward-thinking Blueprint 2040 is currently setting the course for the University's future design and institutional response to the changing needs of Guyana, the region and the world. UG is currently celebrating its 60th anniversary and is stepping up its focus on becoming one of the leading and most sought-after educational institutions in the world for both staff and students.

**Contact:**

Mrs. Krest Petty

Public Relations Officer

Department of Events Conferences and Communications (DECC) 592-623-5104