

Citation, Proposed Doctor of Laws honoris causa for the Hon. Mr Al Gore

The Honourable Al Gore is a highly distinguished international voice in global efforts to recognise and tackle human induced climate change.

Albert Arnold ('Al') Gore Jr, born Washington, D.C. in 1948, gained a Bachelor of Arts *cum laude* from Harvard College in 1969 before enlisting in the US Army. After active service in Vietnam, he was honourably discharged in 1971. Gore then was awarded a Rockefeller Foundation scholarship to attend Vanderbilt University's School of Divinity (1971-72), and began working as an investigative journalist with *The Tennessean* that same year, following on from experience in journalism he had gained whilst in the US Army. In 1974, Gore entered the Vanderbilt University Law School, but discontinued his studies in 1976 without graduating to successfully stand for a seat, representing Tennessee, in the US House of Representatives.

Gore served in the US Congress for sixteen years, firstly in the House of Representatives (1977-85) and then in the Senate (1985-93). Although he had been a contender for the Democratic Party nomination for US President in 1988, he became the Vice-Presidential running mate of Bill Clinton in the 1992 US Presidential election. Gore became the 45th Vice President of the United States in 1993, serving until the end of the Clinton administration in 2001. He was then the Democratic Party's nominee for US President in 2000.

Gore's interest in environmental issues was sparked through classes he took at Harvard, specifically those with Professor Roger Revelle, who through his oceanographic research at the Scripps Institute in the 1950s was one of the first scientists to demonstrate and study the effects of anthropogenic global warming. Not long after taking up his seat, Gore held the first congressional hearings on climate change co-sponsoring hearings on global warming and toxic waste. He continued to engage on environmental issues throughout the 1980s. In 1990, he presided over an international conference of legislators that sought to create a plan by which economic growth in developing countries was supported by industrialized nations while ensuring positive environmental outcomes. Gore helped broker the Kyoto Protocol in 1997.

Gore has written a series of books discussing environmental issues and climate change. The first of these, *Earth in the Balance* (1992), was published prior to his Vice-Presidential nomination. They were followed by *An Inconvenient Truth* (2006), *The Assault on Reason* (2007), *Our Choice: A Plan to Solve the Climate Crisis* (2009) and, most recently, *The Future: Six Drivers of Global Change* (2013). Gore's writing has received praise and critical acclaim, such as *The Guardian's* review of *The Future* in 2013, which described it as "a formidable mix of history, science and common experience... a luminously intelligent analysis that is packed with arresting ideas and facts."

Gore's environmental work was broadcast to a wide international audience with the release of the documentary film *An Inconvenient Truth* in 2006. The film, based on a slide show presentation that he had developed over many years, broke box office records on its release. The film received a standing ovation when shown at the Sundance Film Festival, and went on to win the Sir David Attenborough award for excellence in nature filmmaking at the Santa Barbara International Film Festival and an Academy Award in 2007. A sequel to the 2006 film, *An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power* will be released at the Sundance Film Festival in July 2017.

Al Gore and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 2007, with the Nobel Committee noting "their efforts to build up and disseminate greater knowledge about man-made climate change, and to lay the foundations for the measures that are needed to counteract such change". The Committee also noted that Gore is "probably the single individual who has done most to create greater worldwide understanding of the measures that need to be adopted" in order to tackle climate change.

Through effective high level engagement with key governments, Gore was a strong and influential leader for the successful conclusion of the historic 2015 Paris Climate Agreement, the first time that nearly all countries

have put forward commitments to tackle climate change under ambitious long term goals.

In 2011, Gore established (and continues to chair) a major international non-profit charity now called 'The Climate Reality Project' to further climate science and solutions outreach and engagement. He has now personally trained over 11,000 people from more than 70 countries to present regionalized versions of his updated slide show (featured in *An Inconvenient Truth*), supported by branches in India, China, Southern Africa, Europe, Canada, Brazil, Mexico, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Australia.

Al Gore has established a close working relationship with the Melbourne Sustainable Society Institute (MSSI) and the broader University of Melbourne community. His visit to the University in July 2015 included a lecture to a packed Wilson Hall and led to a successful research roundtable with eminent professors from across the University to explore the opportunities to achieve a successful Paris Climate Agreement later that year. He regularly invites Professor Don Henry, Melbourne Enterprise Professor of Environmentalism in MSSI, to assist as Master of Ceremonies for his training workshops around the world, and uses international briefing papers prepared by MSSI in his continued environmentalist activities. Support for his climate science and solutions outreach in Australia is based within MSSI.

The Hon. Al Gore continues to perform his singular role as a global voice speaking truth to power and enjoining all people to participate in the conversation about effective, urgent and just climate change action.