

News Release
May 27, 2014
For Immediate Release

AST Names New President Daniel W. O'Brien

Halifax, NS—Steve Foran, Chair of the Board of Governors of Atlantic School of Theology, is pleased to announce the appointment of Daniel W. O'Brien to the position of president. Dr. O'Brien takes up this appointment for one year beginning August 5, 2014, while the university conducts a search for a permanent president. He takes over from the Rev. Canon Eric Beresford, who is leaving the position after serving two terms as president.

Dr. O'Brien returns to AST after serving two years as President of NSCAD University. Following a term as Acting President of Atlantic School of Theology in 2011, Dr. O'Brien was appointed in 2012 by the Province of Nova Scotia to serve as a facilitator of sustainability planning at NSCAD University. In May of that same year, he began a two-year special term as president and is currently finishing that mandate. During his time at NSCAD, he has been able to lead the university back to financial sustainability, implement new recruitment strategies, oversee the introduction of collaborative programs with post-secondary partners, build closer relationships with stakeholders, oversee three major studies, introduce a new board governance structure, and conclude two collective agreements without work disruptions. Dr. O'Brien's early career included 21 years serving Dalhousie in a variety of academic and administrative positions. Following that, he served as president of St. Thomas University in Fredericton, New Brunswick, from August 1990 until June 2006. In 2010 Dr. O'Brien was installed as St. Thomas University's first President Emeritus. Under his leadership, St. Thomas went through remarkable growth and change, as well as three successful fundraising campaigns.

Dr. O'Brien holds a doctoral degree and a post-graduate advanced diploma in research and social planning from the University of Pennsylvania, a Master's degree from the Maritime School of Social Work at Dalhousie University, and a

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Bachelor of Commerce degree from Saint Mary's University. He holds a number of honorary awards, including an honorary life membership in the Nova Scotia Association of Social Workers, a commemorative medal for the 125th Anniversary of the Confederation of Canada (1993), a Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal (2002), and a Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal (2013). In May 2003, the University of New Brunswick awarded O'Brien an honorary degree (D.Litt). He was inducted into the Order of New Brunswick in October 2005 and the Order of Canada in 2007. In April 2006, O'Brien was awarded a Knighthood in the Pontifical Order of St. Gregory. In July 2010, the university named its principal study hall, located in the new, award-winning, Margaret Norrie McCain Hall, in his honor.

The AST Board of Governors looks forward to working with Dr. O'Brien and drawing on his extensive leadership experience.

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