Her Excellency the Right Honourable
Julie Payette
Governor General of Canada
Her Excellency the Right Honourable
Julie Payette, Governor General and
Commander-in-Chief of Canada

Canada’s 29th governor general, Julie Payette, has worked as an astronaut, engineer, science broadcaster, scholar, administrator and corporate director.

The first Canadian to board the International Space Station, Ms. Payette participated in two space missions, aboard the *Discovery STS-96* (1999) and *Endeavour STS-127* (2009) shuttles. She also served as CAPCOM (capsule communicator) at NASA’s Mission Control Center in Houston, Texas, and was chief astronaut for the Canadian Space Agency (2000–07).

Ms. Payette worked as a public policy scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars (2011) and as Québec scientific delegate to the United States in Washington, D.C. (2011–13). She then served as chief operating officer of the Montréal Science Centre (2013–16).

Ms. Payette has been active in multiple facets of society throughout her career, notably with a number of organizations dedicated to youth, culture and sport. She has produced several scientific outreach short programs on Radio-Canada and has acted as a member of McGill University’s Faculty of Engineering Advisory Board. She currently serves as a member of the International Olympic Committee’s Women in Sport Commission.

A member of the Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec and a fellow of the International Academy of Astronautics, Ms. Payette has an international baccalaureate from the United World College of the Atlantic in the United Kingdom, a Bachelor of Electrical Engineering degree from McGill University, a Master of Applied Science in Computer Engineering degree from
the University of Toronto and a certificate in cyber security from York University. In addition, Ms. Payette can converse in six languages, is an accomplished musician and holds a commercial pilot licence.

The recipient of many distinctions and 28 honorary doctorates, Ms. Payette was first invested into the Order of Canada in 2010, and is a Knight of the Ordre national du Québec.

When duty calls, there is only one answer. I am so privileged, so honoured to have the opportunity to represent you and to speak on behalf of our wonderful country.

The Governor General’s Installation Speech

October 2, 2017

Becoming Canada’s 29th Governor General during a ceremony at the Senate on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, Ontario. (October 2, 2017)
As the representative of Canada’s head of State (the Sovereign, presently Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II), the Governor General is a key figure in Canada’s parliamentary democracy. She exercises the constitutional duties that lie at the heart of the country’s system of government; represents Canada at home and abroad; provides support and symbolic leadership to the members of the Canadian Armed Forces; recognizes and encourages excellence and outstanding achievement; and brings Canadians together.

Representing the Canadian Crown

In Canada, the duties of head of State (the Sovereign) and head of Government (the prime minister) are distinct. As the head of State's representative in Canada, the Governor General exercises constitutional duties and acts as a safeguard of our parliamentary democracy. As such, the Governor General is non-partisan and apolitical. One of the Governor General’s most important constitutional duties is to ensure Canada always has a prime minister who has the confidence of the elected chamber. Also, by granting assent, the Governor General plays a critical role in parliamentary bills becoming law.

*The role of governor general was constitutional conceived but must be lived culturally.*

Vincent Massey, governor general of Canada from 1952-1959

We live in a complicated world, and nothing is simple, but even in these fast-changing times, we must stay true to ourselves.

Canada Day Speech on Parliament Hill

July 1st, 2018
Presenting musical artists Tegan and Sara with the Governor General’s Performing Arts Award during a ceremony held at the governor general’s official residence in Ottawa, Ontario. (June 1st, 2018)

Presiding over the swearing-in of the Chief Justice of Canada, the Right Honourable Richard Wagner at the governor general’s official residence in Ottawa, Ontario. (December 18, 2017)

Meeting with First Nations leaders during a reception in Edmonton, Alberta. (May 15, 2018)
Flying a Royal Canadian Air Force maritime helicopter. (November 7, 2018)

Supporting Canadian athletes at the Olympic Winter Games in PyeongChang, South Korea. (February 7, 2018)

Meeting His Excellency Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic, at the governor general’s official residence in Ottawa, Ontario. (June 6, 2018)
Representing Canada Internationally

The Governor General regularly hosts foreign leaders and dignitaries during their visits to Canada. She conducts State and official visits to various countries on behalf of Canadians. During these visits, the Governor General may lead delegations of individuals who reflect Canada’s diversity and expertise in order to strengthen the country’s international relationships. The Governor General also officially welcomes incoming foreign heads of diplomatic missions and signs the diplomatic letters of outgoing Canadian representatives.

Serving as Commander-in-Chief of Canada

The Governor General, in her capacity as the representative of the Sovereign, maintains a special relationship with the Canadian Armed Forces that is both constitutional and ceremonial. In discharging the duties of commander-in-chief, the Governor General visits with and honours troops and their families at home and abroad. The Governor General also awards military honours, presents colours to units, approves new military badges and insignia, and signs commission scrolls.
Encouraging Excellence

Canada’s governors general have shaped our cultural landscape and fostered a tradition of excellence through the creation of awards and the presentation of honours. Recipients include those who have demonstrated outstanding achievement, valour, bravery and dedication to service. The Order of Canada, the Governor’s General Literary Awards and the Decorations for Bravery are among the ways the accomplishments of Canadians are celebrated and encouraged.

Bringing Canadians Together

In a country as vast and diverse as Canada, the Governor General fosters collaboration by bringing Canadians together and celebrating values, culture and heritage. The Governor General visits Canadians from coast to coast to coast and participates in commemorations, national celebrations and community activities. She also hosts events at both official residences: Rideau Hall, in Canada’s capital, Ottawa, and at the Citadelle in the City of Québec.

What makes our country welcoming, prosperous and vibrant is you, Canadians and all those who have chosen to live here with us in Canada.

Canada Day Speech on Parliament Hill
July 1st, 2018
Speaking with science students during a solar-powered vehicle demonstration in Toronto, Ontario. (February 20, 2018)

Talking with Elders in the town of Inuvik, Northwest Territories. (November 16, 2017)

Presenting a medal to Maestro Kent Nagano, conductor and music director of the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal in Montréal, Quebec. (May 25, 2018)
“Aim high, dare to dream. The sky has no limit.”

With these closing words of her inaugural speech, Governor General Julie Payette highlighted the central place she gives to imagination, aspiration, boldness and hard work.

Throughout her mandate, Julie Payette will encourage Canadians to

- Ask why: value knowledge, facts, curiosity and critical thinking;
- Build bridges: work hand in hand with people of various backgrounds for success;
- Be active: explore your potential and push boundaries in both mind and body.
Having worked on the International Space Station with colleagues of many different nationalities, Governor General Julie Payette believes that people can rise above limitations and differences to achieve remarkable feats for the good of all—something that is reflected throughout her mandate.
The Governor General's Coat of Arms

The open wing at the centre of the coat of arms symbolizes exploration, liberty and the safety of family ties. It also represents Ms. Payette’s career as an aviator and astronaut. The Royal Crown symbolizes the viceregal office and service to all Canadians.

Above the shield, the astronaut’s helmet represents the quest for knowledge extending beyond the frontiers of the known world. The musical stave and first notes of Alessandro Marcello’s “Oboe Concerto” symbolize the creativity and virtuosity of human beings and evoke Ms. Payette's lifelong interest in classical music.

Meaning “Through hardship to the stars,” the Latin motto highlights the importance of perseverance and effort.

The two lynx, proud, agile and strong, represent the people of Canada. The stars and laurel leaves around their necks symbolize the spark of passion in each of us, inspiring us to dare to dream.

Represented here without borders, as seen from space, our planet looks like a blue marble on a backdrop of darkness. It remains the only place where humans can live. The mathematical symbol for the sum, sigma (Σ), illustrates the power of facts and science, and reminds us that we share this Earth and a responsibility to care for it.

Note: As head of the Canadian Heraldic Authority, the Governor General also grants armorial bearings (coats of arms, flags and badges) in Canada.
Inspection of the Ceremonial Guard at Rideau Hall, the governor general’s official residence in Ottawa, Ontario. (August 20, 2018)

For more information, visit gg.ca

Cover Photo (English Version): Meeting young Canadians in Victoria, British Columbia. (March 20, 2018)

Cover Photo (French Version): Meeting with the crew of the historic sailboat, the Bluenose II, in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia. (June 26, 2018)

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NASA: pg. 11

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ISSN: 978-0-660-27731-8
Catalogue #: SO2-22/2018E-PDF

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