

Office of the Dean

Professional Faculties Building, Room 3268

Telephone: 403-220-5945

Fax: 403-284-1391

Email: sieppert@ucalgary.ca

August 30, 2018

David Robinson

Executive Director

Canadian Association of University Teacher – Lee Lorch Award

2705, promenade Queensview Drive, Ottawa (Ontario K2B 8K2)

RE: Nomination of PROFESSOR DAVID C. ESTE to the CAUT Lee Lorch Award

Dear Executive Director Robinson:

On behalf of the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Calgary, I am deeply honored and pleased to nominate Professor David Clarence Este to the Canadian Association of University Teacher – Lee Lorch Award. He is a superb, generous academic who has become a personal hero to me and a treasured mentor for so many of my academic colleagues.

I have worked with Dr. Este for over 25 years, and in that time have seen his remarkable contributions as scholar, teacher, mentor, and champion for positive change in our community. He is undoubtedly one of the most capable and accomplished academic colleagues I have ever worked with. As Dean, I have also been Dr. Este's supervisor for eight years and have benefitted tremendously from his leadership and commitment to the academic process. In this latter period, Dr. Este served as both my Associate Dean Research and Associate Dean Academic. He excelled in both, and in particular found creative and passionate ways to support our colleagues. Based on these experiences, I can say with absolute conviction and passion that he is the perfect choice for the Lee Lorch Award. He is a singularly capable and generous university teacher, researcher, and community leader. He is in fact my role model for what an outstanding academic can be.

Dr. Este has a rich history of creating and maintaining collaborative relationships within and beyond the University of Calgary. For over two decades, he has been one of the University's most successful scholars, bringing in over \$3 million in research grants and publishing many notable papers. However, this is not what sets his research record apart. Instead, the deep and lasting relationships characterize this research that stand out. As a social work scholar, Dr. Este conducts work that is inherently community-based and inclusive. For example, Dr. Este just served as principal investigator on a \$3 million, major research initiative focused on mental health stigma in

Canada's Asian communities. In that work, Dr. Este has fueled powerful relationships with those communities and the dozens of organizations that collaborate in this work. Simultaneously, he has also conducted this work with academic researchers across Canada. Across all of these projects and professional relationships, Dr. Este has been the catalyst, the voice of change, and a beacon that brings diverse groups together. He demonstrates a unique ability to integrate the need for new knowledge with the need for community change and collaboration. This makes him an incredibly powerful ally for those who work in these areas.

Dr. Este is one of Canada's most respected scholars in the area of diversity, mental health, and multicultural practice. As you will see in his curriculum vitae, his academic record speaks for itself. However, two of Professor Este's recent co-edited books speak to the power of his academic ability and voice. His works entitled *Racism and Anti-Racism in Canada*, and *Race and Well-Being (The Lives, Hopes and Activism of African Canadians)*, clearly demonstrate how Dr. Este blends his academic expertise with his community service leadership. He has done so consistently for almost three decades, and his work has directly shaped our responses to social marginalization, mental health services, and many other areas requiring policy advocacy in Canada.

Very active in various communities and organizations, Dr. Este serves on the Committee of Calgary Domestic Violence Collective (Men and Boys subcommittee), the Committee of Working Group on Canadian Black Congress (now known as the Federation of Black Canadians), the Portfolio Advisory Committee of United Way of Calgary, and the Review Committee of United Way of Calgary.

In every instance, Dr. Este has developed a reputation for outstanding work and a driving passion for working collaboratively. I personally receive – on a very consistent basis -- feedback from community members and researchers who have worked with Dr. Este. They describe him as a natural leader who takes great care to share leadership, mentor junior researchers, and build strong communities. I have also witnessed this supreme generosity in the way that Dr. Este mentors others within the faculty. During his tenure here, Dr. Este has routinely supervised as many as 30 graduate students in a year, and the number of successful students he has guided number in the hundreds. As you will notice in the nomination package, current colleagues and past students comment on the dedication and wisdom he demonstrates in the mentoring process. He spends countless hours every year to connect with our students, learn deeply about their research, share his knowledge and experience, and perhaps most importantly, inspire them to become superb social work professionals.

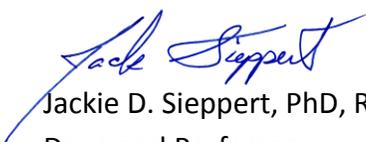
I have also observed Dr. Este take this same approach and skill set to the process of welcoming and supporting new academic colleagues. Another example will help illustrate how Dr. Este goes above and beyond in this regard. In the last two years the Faculty of Social Work has replaced a quarter of our faculty complement through hiring new, junior Assistant Professors. To a person, they have chosen Dr. Este as a key mentor. He meets with them regularly, answers questions about university processes, advises them on career issues, and offers a safe and stable source of guidance. In essence, he has become the very cornerstone of our mentoring efforts for junior faculty members. In the enclosed documents to this nomination, you will see many of their names identified as witnesses to his efforts as a truly wise mentor.

Dr. Este is an absolute role model in our faculty. He models inclusive and respectful behavior, even in the midst of heated debates. At meetings he ensures that every person is not only allowed to speak, but is encouraged and supported to speak in a safe and supportive environment. In this way, Dr. Este is fundamental to the creation and valuing of diverse perspectives in the Faculty of Social Work. I have no doubt that this is also true in his many national-level projects. He exemplifies the ability to support academic freedom and debate, while not shying away from difficult and necessary conversations.

I will conclude by saying Dr. Este is clearly one of the most accomplished academics I have ever worked with. However, it is his spirit of generosity, his total dedication to mentoring, and his natural ability to work collaboratively that set him apart. He is a true gift to the Faculty of Social Work and the University of Calgary. Even after more than two decades of working together, I remain in awe of his capacity to blend supreme academic talent with a driving passion for supporting others. As Dean, I would be lost without his guidance, wisdom and support. I believe he clearly deserves recognition with the Canadian Association of University Teacher – Lee Lorch Award.

I have enclosed on the following pages a copy of Dr. Este's curriculum vitae, a nomination package of his exemplary record in teaching, research, and community engagement, and a copy of his latest publications fresh from the printing press. They are a testament to Professor Este's highly esteemed and reputable accomplishments as a university teacher, a researcher, and a community champion. I encourage you to explore his accomplishments in detail, so that you too develop a sense of this magnificent colleague that I have had the honour to work beside for decades.

Sincerely,



Jackie D. Sieppert, PhD, RSW
Dean and Professor