

Good evening everyone. Thank you Prof. Lokki.

President Teeri, deans, professors, doctors and guests, it's a distinct honor to be speaking to you this evening and at this glittering event.

First, let me begin by congratulating all of the new doctors here tonight and welcoming them to the community of scholars. Also I congratulate my fellow honorary degree recipients. It is an extraordinarily accomplished group, and I feel very honored to be sharing this recognition with them. Needless to say, I am extremely grateful to the University faculty for honoring me with this honorary degree.

I was asked to make some personal remarks, and I'm happy to do so. My association with Aalto University began almost exactly a decade ago, before the three institutions combined to create Aalto.

In particular, when visiting the University of Pennsylvania in September 2004 to give a seminar, I met Prof. Visa Koivunen, of the Department of Signal Processing & Acoustics, of the then Helsinki University of Technology, who was visiting Penn as an adjunct professor that year. I had met Visa before, but on that occasion he invited me to visit Finland, an invitation that led to a Nokia-sponsored lecture tour a year or so later.

That visit started a collaboration between our two research groups, which has grown considerably and continues to today. I have visited Helsinki University of Technology and then Aalto on several occasions, and Visa, who has since become an Academy of Finland Professor, has visited Princeton for two sabbatical years and several summers, and my wife Connie and I have had the pleasure of getting to know him and his family very well. Also, many of his students and postdocs have visited me in Princeton for both short and extended stays. Yesterday, Visa organized a symposium at which many of them spoke. It was a very impressive event.

So, this has been a very productive collaboration, resulting in dozens of publications, including journal articles, conference presentations, and even a U.S. patent, and also leading to technological innovations in the field of wireless communications that have found their way into practice through Visa's close association with Nokia.

In more recent times, my Aalto collaborations have extended also to Prof. Camilla Hollanti and her students in the Department of Mathematics and Systems Analysis, which is also developing into a very productive relationship. I should also say that these collaborations have led to further connections in the Finnish academic world, including at Oulu, Tampere and elsewhere.

My students, colleagues and I have benefitted tremendously from these collaborations - and I look forward to continuing them for many years to come.

On my first visit to Helsinki, Aalto University didn't exist. But, on two of my subsequent visits Aalto had been created, and I had the opportunity to talk with President Teeri about the genesis of the University and the plans that she and her colleagues have for its development.

I have been very impressed with these plans and the overall philosophy of the institution. Combining institutes dedicated to art, design & architecture, to economics & business, and to science & engineering, was a prescient move that is very much at the forefront of an important movement in worldwide higher education today, including at my own institution of Princeton, among many others.

These three fields have much to offer one another, and their combination produces a very powerful intellectual milieu that allows students to address societal problems holistically rather than from the necessarily narrower viewpoint of a single field. The whole of these fields is greater than the components, and, given the strengths and sizes of the components that went into making up Aalto University, it is almost uniquely poised to take maximal advantage of the synergies that are created by this combination of intellectual activities.

So, both as a scholar and as an educator, I very much look forward to my continued association with Aalto University.

From the viewpoint of an educator of engineers, I expect its influence in the world of higher education (and beyond) only to grow as its distinctive mix of intellectual outlooks becomes a more central part of higher education.

As a researcher, my students and I have benefitted tremendously from our association with our collaborators here, and I expect this to continue for the rest of my career.

I might add that I also greatly enjoy the ceremonial academic traditions of Finnish universities. Having served earlier as a doctoral opponent and now in this setting, it is very pleasing to be immersed in the elegance and richness and of these events, and also to have my own doctor's hat!

Of course, receiving an honorary degree from any institution is quite special, but because of the very close relationships that I've developed with colleagues here, and also because of the unique place within the higher education universe that this institution occupies, to receive an honorary doctorate from Aalto University is a singular honor that I will

always cherish. Now I can say that I am a very proud alumnus of this institution.

Well, there are more festivities to come, and so I think I will end here.

Thank you again to President Teeri and others who had a role in selecting me for this very distinctive honor, and again warmest congratulations to the others being honored here this evening.

Thank you, and good evening.