

Ceremony of the Doctorate Honoris Causa Award to Prof. Kip S. Thorne. Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya•BarcelonaTech (UPC). 25th May 2017.

Closing address by Prof. Enric Fossas, rector of the UPC

First of all, I would like to thank Professor Kip Thorne for accepting the honor of being part of our Senate and for making the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya proud in this way.

I would also like to thank Professor Enrique García-Berro for his oration and particularly the initiative he took towards awarding Professor Thorne an honorary doctoral degree. Enrique, thank you for contributing to making our university bigger and better.

We have just seen why Professor Thorne has been awarded an honorary doctoral degree. Professor García-Berro had already alerted us to his modesty, which you must also have appreciated in his acceptance speech.

His modesty, however, does not diminish the quantity and quality of his merits. In fact, as it has been made clear today, he is one of the world's leading experts in gravitational physics and astrophysics, especially stellar evolution, the study of black holes and the emission of gravitational waves.

I will not review his career now and will refer only to what we might call his "inspirational ability", which is no less valuable than his career as a scientist.

Professor Thorne has said that his merit was identifying what needed to be done and suggesting others to do it. This is precisely the spirit of true leaders, who take the blame when things go wrong, who explain that results are the product of teamwork, but who also, when an achievement really is an indisputable success, openly state that the achievement is someone else's.

This is the type of leadership that Professor Thorne has shown over the years. He is a humble leader who really has driven research forward, and he is an example to us all.

Thank you, Professor Thorne, for your mastery.

Thank you all.