

LEADERSHIP

# Rhodes to honour Prof Karim with doctorate

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RHODES University will this week honour Professor Salim Abdool Karim, who is widely recognised for his scientific and leadership contributions in Aids and Covid-19, with an honorary doctorate.

The university in Makhanda, previously known as Grahamstown, announced yesterday that at its second virtual graduation ceremony for Masters and PhD students on Friday, it would confer a degree of Doctor of Science (DSc) (honoris causa) on Karim.

Rhodes said that over the years, the epidemiologist has built a firm repu-

tation as an outstanding, internationally recognised academic researcher on HIV/Aids research and he conscientiously led the South African public to an understanding of the Sars-CoV-2 virus.

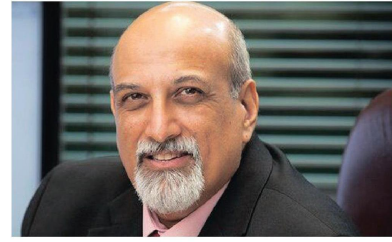
“Our nation owes you an inestimable debt of gratitude and appreciation for all that you have done to give much hope to many South Africans and for being a passionate advocate of science to guide the South African response to Covid-19,” said Rhodes University vice-chancellor Dr Sizwe Mabizela.

He added that in the many public briefings on Covid-19, Karim provided extremely lucid explanations

and unambiguous information for the South African public and explained the scientific basis for the government’s response to the pandemic.

Karim is a member of the Science Council of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the WHO TB-HIV Task Force. He is the chairperson of the WHO’s Strategic and Technical Advisory Committee on HIV and hepatitis. He is a member of the Africa Task Force for coronavirus, the AU Commission on Covid-19 and the Lancet Commission on Covid-19.

For his critically important role in the Covid-19 pandemic, he received, jointly with Dr Anthony Fauci, the 2020 John Maddox Prize for “Standing



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up for Science”.

The university said that Karim was ranked among the world’s most highly cited scientists by Web of Science and he has served on the boards of several prestigious journals, including the New England Journal of Medicine, Lancet Global Health and Lancet HIV.

Karim’s many awards include the AUs “Kwame Nkrumah Award”, Africa’s most prestigious scientific award.

He is an elected fellow of The World Academy of Sciences, the African Academy of Sciences, the Academy of Science in South Africa, the Royal Society of South Africa and the American Academy of Microbiology.

He is also a member of the US

National Academy of Medicine and a Fellow of the Royal Society.

“I am deeply grateful to Rhodes University for this honour. As one of the finest universities on the African continent, Rhodes University represents both scientific excellence and a strong commitment to academic freedom.

“These are the same principles needed in providing policy advice – whether on pandemics, climate change or other contentious challenging areas of public action. In the course of both the HIV and Covid-19 pandemics, I have personally witnessed the importance of staying true to science and evidence,” Karim said on being honoured with this doctorate.