

# **The Honorary Graduate: Rosanna Preston**

**The Orator: Diana Harcourt**

## **Rosanna is to be awarded the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Science**

After completing a degree in Biology and Computer Science at York University Rosanna started her career as a software engineer, programming telephone exchanges for BT, but then moved into the Voluntary Sector where she worked for over 25 years. Rosanna's first role was Sign Language Interpreter at Action on Hearing Loss (then RNID), where she progressed to Director of Communication Services, after which she ran the British Association for Performing Arts Medicine and then the Musicians' Benevolent Fund. Most recently, Rosanna spent 8 years as Chief Executive of the Cleft Lip and Palate Association (CLAPA).

In 2011 Rosanna was appointed Chair of the Vocational Training Charitable Trust's (VTCT) Charitable Giving Committee and became a founding Trustee and Chair of the newly created VTCT Foundation in 2014. This grant-making charity provides funding for medical research in the field of disfigurement and financial and practical support for charities helping those living with visible difference.

Rosanna's long-standing commitment to research is evident in her involvement in the Cleft Care UK (CCUK) study, a cross-sectional survey of five year old children with non-syndromic unilateral cleft lip and palate. She facilitated patient involvement, co-authored two of their papers and disseminated the results through CLAPA events. She has been a member of the Steering Committee at the Centre for Appearance Research (CAR) since 2008 and also sat on the Cleft and Craniofacial Clinical Studies Group from its inception until her retirement. Rosanna has long promoted patient involvement in research, most notably as a member of the steering group for the James Lind Alliance Priority Setting Partnership, bringing together equal numbers of patients and clinicians to identify the most pressing research questions in cleft care.

Rosanna has represented patients on numerous NHS and government decision-making panels, including the Cleft Clinical Reference Group which produced the new NHS National Standards for Cleft Care in 2015. Before she retired Rosanna regularly spoke at National and International Conferences and she was Chair of the UK Mirror Group and UK representative for the European Committee of Standardisation's Technical Report on early care for cleft lip/palate babies.

In 2016 Rosanna decided to take early retirement in order to spend more time pursuing various life-long interests in such things as bee-keeping, scything her own hay meadows and even gaining a licence for surveying dormice. She maintains her interest in research and visible difference through her continuing roles as Chair of the VTCT Foundation and member of the CAR steering group.

The Honorary Degree is awarded in recognition of Rosanna's contribution to improving the provision of care and support for people with cleft lip or palate and ongoing commitment and support for the work of the Centre for Appearance Research UWE.