

Degree honour for store boss and footballer

A man who ran a well-known store in Raploch for more than 26 years was this week honoured by the University of Stirling.

Bridge of Allan-based Pete Cheema received recognition for his outstanding contribution to the convenience store sector in Scotland.

Mr Cheema, whose full name is Pargan Singh Cheema, was born in Wolverhampton. He based himself in Scotland from 1988 onwards and quickly established a reputation as an award-winning retailer, operating a store in the Raploch area for 26 years.

He was appointed to the role of chief executive of the Scottish Grocers Federation in 2015 having previously served as president between 2006 and 2008 and is credited with turning it into a influential trade body.

Mr Cheema said: "It is a heartfelt privilege to be receiving this honorary

doctorate. The university has achieved international recognition and status for academic excellence and this award shows that people from all backgrounds can have their

contribution recognised and celebrated at the very highest level."

Another to receive an honorary degree at this week's graduation ceremonies at the university was Lilian Thuram, France's most-capped footballer and a World Cup winner.

Mr Thuram - who starred for Barcelona, Juventus, Parma and Monaco during his illustrious club career - played 142 appearances for the national team between 1994 and 2008.

He has a winners' medal from the 2000 European

Championships and played alongside Marcel Desailly, Zinedine Zidane and Didier Deschamps in the French team which lifted the 1998 World Cup.

In 2008, at the end of his football career, the former defender, a Unicef ambassador, set up the Lilian Thuram Foundation, which educates against racism and promotes equality.

Mr Thuram, who received his doctorate for his outstanding contribution to football and commitment to tackling racism through education, said: "Sport, especially the world's number one sport, football, is a wonderful way of progressing equality. It helps us to come closer to each other because, whatever the colour of our skin, our sexuality, or our religion, we share the same emotions. I feel deeply honoured to receive this award."

Alison Brittain, chief executive of Whitbread, was also honoured by the university.

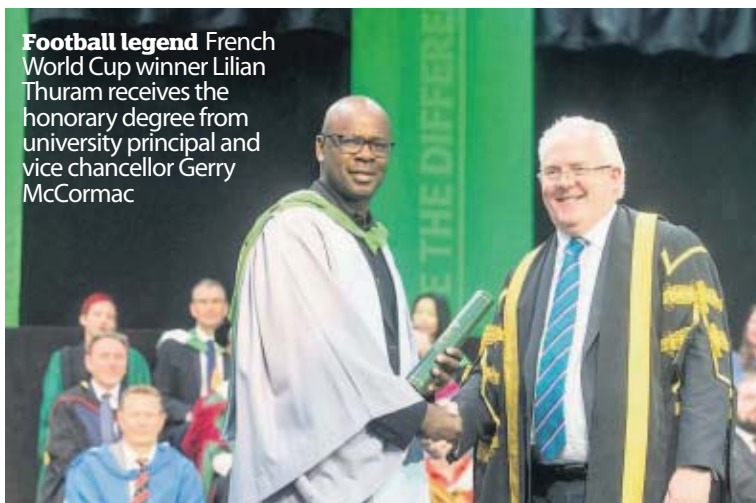
The Stirling graduate, is one of only five female chief executives listed on the FTSE 100. Throughout her career, which also included a highly successful time in the banking industry, Mrs Brittain has championed diversity.

She received the honorary degree for her outstanding contribution to business and leadership.

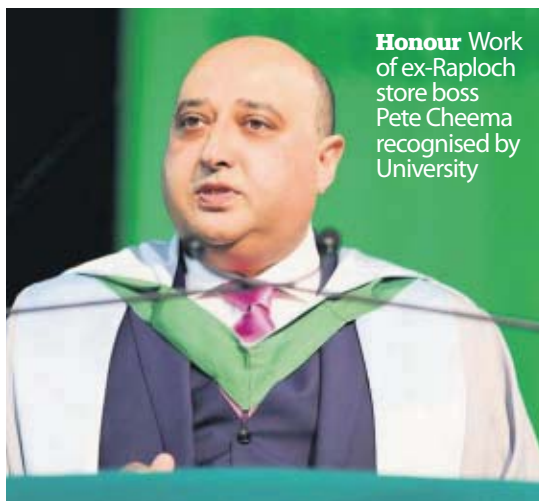
Others to receive honorary doctorates were Outlander star Sam Heughan and retail expert Professor John Dawson.



Football legend French World Cup winner Lilian Thuram receives the honorary degree from university principal and vice chancellor Gerry McCormac



Honour Work of ex-Raploch store boss Pete Cheema recognised by University



High flyer Businesswoman Alison Brittain

