

Good Morning

Board of Trustees, President Dahlberg, Provost Stern, Dean Greenwood Faculty,
Staff, Family, Friends, and most importantly Graduates.

My it is early! And for those of you who have not yet been to bed from the parties last night you might think about closing your eyes and trying to get 5 minutes' rest!

However, you will miss my very quick speed dating lesson, about career and life as I have experienced it.....sleep at your own peril!

I am honored to address such a distinguished group of students here today and I want to congratulate you on this incredible achievement. Everyone here can appreciate the hard work, commitment and sacrifice you have made to get to this point.

When asked to deliver this address I wondered what I might say that anyone would want to hear. As you can see, I am old, and you are young.....might be a slight disconnect. After worrying about this for some time, my wife, out of desperation, simply said why not just tell them about how UTampa affected your life and future, to which my girls would respond; yeah dad you can be the cautionary tale!

Somehow, I have that reputation with my family. But now you know for sure I am not going to impress anyone.

So, this is what I will say in the next few minutes that resonates with me 48 years later after leaving this institution.

First, I am sure that this university has done its job and prepared you well with the academic knowledge and skills that you are going to need going forward. I remember that well from my time here.

Second, I am sure that you have also had the opportunity to participate in activities and organizations as I had when I was here that were fundamental in shaping character and confidence that directly affected my future.

I came to this university as a community college transfer, naive and lost. I didn't know anyone, had never lived in a big city, and never in a dorm. Back then it was an exceedingly small school, on the brink of collapse, with a single cafeteria, but the one thing that it had was an incredible community, among students and between students and faculty. It was tight and we were close. We didn't have much, but we did have each other, and we made the most of it. When I walk on this incredible campus today, and see all that it has become, I still see that community and how this school cares. And it is directly from the opportunities and activities here, that I had the fortune to run and participate in, that truly

set the stage for all that came after in my life and career. I want to leave you with some of my beliefs that have served both me and my company well. Values that were developed and expanded from my time here.

1. Always be curious, it will lead to opportunity.
2. Be committed, work hard at something you love and play harder and know when to do each.
3. Have an outward focus, if you help others be successful, you will obtain much greater success than you could obtain by your own efforts, it is a force multiplier
4. Always seek and tell the truth, integrity is the only thing you can lose and not regain easily
5. Never forget where you came from

In closing I simply ask you to cherish and hold close to the memories and experiences that you will take from this place; I can promise that they will sweeten with age and be confident that you are prepared and ready for whatever your next step will be.

Class of 2025, Congratulations on a job well done!

Thank you.